

# STOURBRIDGE CHRONICLE



Thursday, February 20, 2014

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Page 24



## Shock as man dies on fishing holiday

AN ANGLER from Brierley Hill died suddenly during a holiday in Goa, just days before he was due home for his daughter's 17th birthday.

Members of Paul Grazier's family this week paid tribute to the 44-year-old 'free-spirited' and hard-working carpenter, who lived with his mother in Larksfield Mews.

Police in northern Goa are investigating the cause of his death, although there are not thought to be any suspicious circumstances.

### Friends

Mr Grazier, a regular visitor to the Indian state, used to leave his room at around 7am each day to go fishing with friends but failed to answer their knocks on his door at a guest house in Anjuna on February 12. They alerted police, who called firefighters and they found him dead in bed after breaking down the door.

Mr Grazier had been due to return to celebrate the 17th birthday of his daughter, Georgia, yesterday.

His mother, Mrs Joan Grazier, 67, said: "He was a son you could rely on. Loving and kind. He was a lovely rogue and a good dad."

Mr Grazier's sister, Julie Cox, 46, of Claverley, said the family including Georgia and his ex-partner, Zoe Matthews, were "devastated".

## Housing OK in nature area

AN EDUCATION centre, nature wardens' base and five four-bedroom houses are to be built on land with in a nature reserve.

The development will be built at Saltwells Wood, Brierley Hill, on the site of Saltwells House, which has been demolished.

Dudley Council's development control committee unanimously approved the scheme at a meeting on Monday but some councillors were concerned over how the Selbourne Homes development and wardens base would co-exist.

# WASTE PLANT GOES TO APPEAL

## Vote on mayor's awards shortlist

NOMINEES in line to receive a prestigious community award have been announced with residents now asked to vote for who they want to win the accolade.

Three individuals and one group are in the running for the Mayor's Award, part of Dudley's annual Civic Awards. They have all been selected by Mayor of Dudley Councillor Alan Finch.

The nominees have stood out to him during his mayoral year and the public can now go online to vote for the one they feel most deserves the award. They can log on to [www.dudley.gov.uk](http://www.dudley.gov.uk) until March 9. It will go to the nominee with most votes and be presented at a civic ceremony in April.

The nominees are John Deane, of Dudley's Royal Air Force Association. He has worked to promote the group and raise for 50 years. Priory Boxing Club's Paul Gough is also in the running. He has inspired youngsters to excel at sport for 20 years.

Community first responder charity First Aid Black Country has been nominated. Volunteers are trained to attend 999 calls and provide care until the ambulance arrives. The other nominee is the Apni Zaroorat Community Network, which works for the people of Lye.

## Pies and ale future at bank

A SCHEME to breathe new life in a historic former bank under plans to open a new restaurant have been given the go-ahead.

Pies and real ale will be on the menu at the Old Bank on the corner of Coventry Street and High Street in Stourbridge.

The building has been empty for eight years but now owner Adam Myers has submitted an application for a change of use for the building, which has been approved under delegated powers.

## New boss for campaign to save theatre



From left, chairman Gordon Downing with supporters Martin Whitehead and Garry Sawers

### Report by Alex Ross

They raised concerns that the plant would blight the landscape, lead to more traffic and emit smells.

Last week ward councillors and residents met to discuss reviving their campaign against the plant.

Councillor Rachel Harris said: "People around here don't want a big waste recycling operation near their homes. This is a built up residential area and is simply not the place."

"We've spoken to people since the appeal has gone in, they are angry the company has done this but many are not surprised. We will be contacting residents soon on how they can get involved."

Clean Power said the six-acre plant, which would create 30 jobs, would release low carbon dioxide emissions and no unpleasant odour.

Domestic and commercial waste would be brought on lorries and turned into gas for combustion creating energy and heat.

It was claimed it would generate electricity for up to 10,000 homes a year.

The appeal will be decided by the Planning Inspectorate.

If the company wins, the council could be forced to pay legal costs.

But more than 350 people signed a petition against the plant.

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**NEWS****CONTENTS**

Peter Rhodes	4
Letters	7
Memory Lane	8
Clubs	14
What's on	24
TV listings	25 - 27
Puzzler	28
Property	29
Motoring	30
Sport	39 & 40

**CONTACT US**

Have you got a story or an event you want covered? The Chronicle and Express & Star have a team of reporters covering Stourbridge who can help:

**Lee Watton:** 01384 353230  
lee.watton@expressandstar.co.uk  
**Heather Large:** 01384 353203  
heather.large@expressandstar.co.uk  
**Louise Jew:** 01384 353201  
louise.jew@expressandstar.co.uk  
**Alex Ross:** 01384 353207  
alex.ross@expressandstar.co.uk  
**Andrew Turton:** 01384 353202  
andrew.turton@expressandstar.co.uk

What's happening in your area? We are always keen to hear about any issues affecting you. E-mail your information and pictures to: dudley.chrons@expressandstar.co.uk

**Sports:**  
Tel: 01902 319453. e-mail: chronsport@expressandstar.co.uk

**Photographic**  
Tel: John Samuels 01902 319431

**Advertising**

**Rebecca Vincze**  
Tel: 01384 399901  
E-mail: rebecca.vincze@expressandstar.co.uk

**Nicky Cope**  
Tel: 01902 319573  
E-mail: n.cope@expressandstar.co.uk

**Distribution:**

**Paul Jones**  
Tel: 01902 319990  
E-mail: p.jones@expressandstar.co.uk

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# Council house protest over centres

CAMPAIGNERS battling cost-cutting changes at children's centres took their fight to the steps of Dudley Council House for a protest ahead of a key budget meeting.

The group of worried parents and members of Dudley Coalition Against the Cuts waved banners and chanted during the hour-long demonstration on February 11. Snow failed to dampen their spirits. Protestors said they believed

changes planned for the centres, including the loss of staff, would have a 'severe impact' on the early education of their youngsters and take away vital support.

Council bosses originally planned to close some of the centres in order to cut costs but reconsidered after an outcry from residents. Although the authority currently plans to keep centres open, they have indicated that jobs will be axed.

There are also plans to place the centres in five clusters around the borough with facilities used by GP surgeries and other NHS services.

But campaigners say they want the centres to continue operating as they do now.

Officials said the £2.3 million cut originally planned to the children's centres had been reduced to £1.5 million.

Sarah Shotton, of Haydon Road,

Pensnett, organised the protest outside the council house last week. Her daughter Mishka attends the Bromley Pensnett centre and she said the staff were 'extraordinary'.

"We are concerned making changes to these centres and the loss of staff will mean the services are not there as much when the children need them and this simply cannot be allowed to happen," she said.

# HMRC to close tax offices as costs cut

TAX offices in Brierley Hill, Wolverhampton and Walsall will close as part of £27 million Government savings.

HM Revenue and Customs has announced it is closing all 281 of its walk-in centres across the country, putting 1,300 jobs at risk. The centres gave face-to-face help to 2.5 million people with tax queries in 2012.

But HMRC will now replace them with a telephone service and home visits in a bid to cut costs, with the centres due to shut in May.

Defended

Union bosses said the move made 'no economic sense'.

Centres are based in Waterfront Way, Brierley Hill; Crown House, Birch Street, Wolverhampton; and Patrician House, Midland Road, in Walsall.

HMRC bosses defended the closures and insisted its new service, being introduced after a trial in the North East, would be more convenient. Ruth Owen, director general for personal tax, said: "HMRC is dedicated to providing help to customers when they need it. The pilot showed that this is a valuable service."

# Assailants thought victim was drug dealer

TWO men who beat up a man they suspected of dealing drugs have been spared jail.

Paul Gardner, 46, and his 27-year-old stepson Anthony Bennington struck as the victim walked down Penicrest Lane, Rowley Regis.

Wolverhampton Crown Court was told that the victim was attacked from behind and knocked to the ground where he was punched and kicked on May 11.

## MP focus on mental health needs

AN investigation has been launched by an MP to find out if mental health patients' needs are being addressed.

Halesowen and Rowley Regis MP James Morris, who leads the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Mental Health, is asking people to share with him their experiences of mental health care. He is also talking to ministers, doctors and health chiefs as part of the inquiry.

Mr Morris said: "The Government's new Health and Social Care Act commits the NHS to giving mental health parity of esteem with physical health but it is vital that we make sure that that commitment goes beyond words on a piece of paper and actually makes a real difference. A third of avoidable deaths in England every year are people with mental health problems and so we all have to recognise that there really is no health without mental health. I hope that anybody who has experience of mental health care will come forward and tell the inquiry how they think things could be improved."

Mr Geoffrey Dann, prosecuting, said that Gardner alleged that his daughter had been offered drugs by the victim.

The father-of-six said some of his children had found hypodermic needles that he suggested had been dumped by the man. He reported the matter to Sandwell Council on three separate occasions and also informed the police but no action had been taken, it was alleged.

The victim denied taking or selling drugs. He told the court: "I was on the floor bleeding after being hit on the head by a metal bar and was being kicked." He received hairline fractures to four ribs and had a head wound that needed to be stapled.

Miss Wendy Miller, defending, said Gardner was concerned for his daughter and the incident escalated out of control.

Gardner from Winchester Road, Rowley Regis admitted causing actual bodily harm.

Bennington from Mount Road, Rowley Regis had earlier been found guilty of assault by a jury after denying the offence.

Gardner was given an eight month jail term suspended for 18 months with 200 hours unpaid work and a three month night time curfew. Bennington received a 12 month jail sentence suspended for 18 months with unpaid work and curfew.

## Eye in sky artwork lands prize



Robert Perry used a night-time aerial image of Birmingham city centre as inspiration

IT is the eye in the Midlands sky which usually helps to catch criminals and give an overview of major incidents. But now the stunning views photographed from the West Midlands Police helicopter have helped an artist to land a prestigious prize.

Stourbridge-based artist Robert Perry specialises in capturing cityscapes on canvas. He struck upon his latest idea after spotting a feature in The Chronicle's sister newspaper the Express & Star showcasing

breathtaking photographs of the Midlands lit up at night taken from the police helicopter.

The 69-year-old former teacher contacted the police who supplied him with bird's eye images. This 6ft by 4ft oil-based work took five days to complete in the studio. It shows a stunning view of Birmingham city centre and won Mr Perry first prize in the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists' competition

## £1 tickets for children

CHILDREN can travel across the West Midlands for just £1 per day with their grandparents this month.

The 'kids for a quid' ticket has been introduced by National Express West Midlands during half-term.

The ticket can be bought from the driver and gives anyone under 16, travelling with an OAP concessionary pass holder, a day's unlimited travel for £1. The offer is valid after 9.30am every day until Sunday and also gets holders two-for-one tickets at attractions such as Dudley Zoo, Black Country Living Museum and the Sealife Centre.

## Family business

A JEWELLERS marking 125 years in business has been congratulated by Dudley South MP Chris Kelly.

TH Baker was started by Thomas Baker in Brierley Hill in 1888, now includes 11 stores and is run by his great-great-grandsons Philip and Andrew Higgins.

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## Backing for new council housing

PLANS to spend £206 million improving thousands of council homes in Dudley over the next five years have been approved.

Members of the Dudley Council's cabinet also agreed to increase rents for tenants by 1.5 per cent. It works out as an average of £1.22 a week from April. The rise is lower than last year's 4.6 per cent increase.

### Reduce

Council bosses said they wanted to keep it small to reduce the pressure on cash-strapped families.

They also approved increases to a number of other charges in line with the rent increase, which include garage rents and service charges for supported accommodation.

All of the rises will come into effect from April 2014.

Cabinet member for housing Councillor Steve Walther said the rent rise had been kept low as the council no longer had to follow a Government formula.

As part of the improvement plan, £13.4m will be spent building more than 100 new council homes in the borough. Councillor Walther told the meeting: "We are looking to provide more affordable housing."

## Car parking fee hike fear

CASH-STRAPPED Dudley Council is looking at increasing car park charges across the borough to bring in £225,000 over the next three years.

But opposition leader Councillor Patrick Harley warned the Labour-led authority against using motorists to bring in more cash.

He said: "At a time when the economy is rapidly improving, this is not the time to choke off the High Street recovery in Dudley with sky high car parking charges."

It comes as the council plans to spend £300,000 replacing 52 outdated pay and display car park machines.

## Battling floods

SOLDIERS arrived in Bedworth this week to help flooding victims and check vital river defences are maintained. Five members of the Royal Irish Regiment arrived in the town to assist Environment Agency staff battling flooding along the River Severn.

## Latest appeal over mosque site rejected

MUSLIM leaders have lost their latest appeal in the High Court as they battle Dudley Council's legal bid to take back land earmarked for a controversial mosque and community centre.

The Dudley Muslim Association lodged the appeal after its defence to Dudley Council's action to reclaim land earmarked for the multi-million pound development in Hall Street was struck out at an earlier hearing.

But Deputy Judge David Halperin QC upheld the earlier ruling.

He said while the association may have been able to resist the council's claim, it had

failed to serve a 'credible' defence during the proceedings.

He said it was now too late for the organisation to put its case in order at the hearing that was held on Friday.

### Disputed

The row goes back to 2003 when the association agreed to give the council a site it owned in Cloughton Street, needed as part of a development, in return for a long lease over the disputed plot between Hall Street and Oakwell Street.

It agreed to begin building work within five years or the lease would come to an end.

But when the scheme came before planners in March 2007 it was rejected.

A planning inspector overturned the decision and the council failed in a legal decision against that ruling.

But by then the deadline for the lease had passed and the council launched the proceedings to reclaim the land in 2010.

The judge said the council viewed the land as a high-profile site and that it did not want it to remain derelict.

Dudley Council leader Councillor David Sparks said the authority's lawyers would now be looking at the judgment before giving advice on how to proceed next.

"This is a very complex legal situation and as leader of the council I have been very careful to act upon the advice of the council's lawyers," he said.

"They will now be studying the judgment fully before advising us on our next course of action.

### Clear

"I have been quite clear that I have a legal duty to follow the advice given and we have followed it to the letter."

The Dudley Muslim Association were unavailable for comment.

## Savage budget cuts to be considered for borough

ARTS and youth services face being slashed and street lights switched off after midnight as part of a cost-cutting budget backed by senior councillors in Dudley.

Streets and parks will not be maintained as often and garden waste will go uncollected for five months of the year as part of the drastic series of measures.

The Labour-run council needs to save £34 million by 2016/17 but has warned it will face a further £23m funding gap. The cabinet's budget will go before members of the full council at a meeting on March 3 for the final decision.

Among savings already identified are cuts to street cleaning, which will see residents being encouraged to hold their own litter picks, and plans to shorten the collection period for green waste to save £100,000. Some street lights will be turned off after midnight to reduce energy bills.

Maintenance of parks around the borough would be reduced to claw back £270,000.

Over the next two years changes will be made to some day centres to make savings and the youth service will also be scaled back, with the possible closure of three centres.

The management of King-swinford's Broadfield House Glass Museum could be transferred to a third party in a bid to trim £170,000 off the budget by 2015/16. Further squeezes in arts funding are predicted including changes to the way Dudley Performing Arts is run.

A revamp of children's centres is also on the cards although initial plans to shut seven of the centres were scrapped following strong public opposition.

The council has also warned there may be compulsory redundancies.

## New pavilion rises from the ashes



Lye Cricket Club Chairman Dave Borley is seen outside the restored and refurbished pavilion

A CRICKET pavilion gutted by a severe fire is to reopen later this month following a £70,000 restoration project.

Arsonists struck at Lye Cricket Club, in Stourbridge Road, in August leaving the £230,000 building a burned-out shell.

But just six months later the building has been restored to its former glory with new fittings and furniture. It will be officially opened at a special celebration event taking place on Friday, February 28.

Officials said they were 'delighted' the project had been completed but admitted it had been a lot of hard work.

Spokesman Jake Hanson, who led the restoration project, said: "It has been a jam-packed couple of months but to see the pavilion restored is brilliant. The way it looks now you would never tell there had been a fire at all."

"The pavilion has been restored to its former glory in plenty of time for the new season as we hoped."

"Although it was utterly heartbreaking to see the pavilion following

the fire we were quite lucky in one way."

"Although the inside was burned out the structure of the pavilion was still sound so we did not have to rebuild it from scratch."

"We hope members of the club and visitors will like the work we have done."

As part of the £70,000 scheme, which was covered by insurance, the interior of the pavilion was completely stripped and repairs carried out on the roof.

## NEWS in brief

### Searching for a woolly runaway

A SHEEP has gone missing in Sedgley.

It has been missing for more than two weeks. Owner Steve Baggett, who owns Foxwood Boarding Kennels in Hurst Hill, has issued an appeal to the public to help him find his pet sheep.

"A dog escaped its lead and jumped over a fence into where my two sheep graze and went for them," he said. "One of the sheep jumped over the fence and I haven't seen her since."

Call Mr Baggett on 07796421841.

### Croc shock as roof damaged

THE reptile house at Dudley Zoo was damaged by high winds. A panel above the crocodile vivarium came loose and keepers had to secure the roof.

It left a female West African dwarf crocodile, named Janet, exposed to the night sky.

Zoo spokeswoman Jill Hitchman said: "There was absolutely no risk of Janet escaping as she is within a secure enclosure inside the building, and spot heaters in the vivarium ensured there was no problem with temperatures falling."

### Young Lions to roar into action

A LIONS club is preparing to host a ceremony to recognise the organisation's best young ambassador.

Thirteen delegates from the UK and Ireland will travel to Dudley for the event this weekend when Dudley Lions Club hosts the national finals of the Young Ambassador of the 21st Century at the Village Hotel.

### Lunch club launch at Beacon Centre

A CHARITY has launched a lunch club to help raise funds for people living with sight loss.

Beacon Centre for the Blind wants groups to visit their Sedgley HQ. Groups can book a visit at £5.95 per person including a meal in the charity's restaurant and a tour of the Wolverhampton Road East base. Call 01902 886795.

### Candle caused fire

AN UNLUCKY couple had their Valentine's night ruined when curtains in their bedroom caught fire from a candle. Fire crews were called to an address in Bradley Street, Pensnett, just after 10pm on Friday.

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## NEWS

**THE BEST  
OF PETER  
RHODES**

IN A reckless moment I suggested the floods might spell the end of HS2. A few hours after that column appeared, a BBC report suggested the need to repair existing lines might put the future of the high-speed railway in doubt. And you can bet your life Auntie Beeb would not suggest such a thing unless she has been talking to someone important.



**IF THE FLOODS DO LEAD TO HS2 BEING CANCELLED, IT WILL BE THE CLOSEST THING TO DIVINE INTERVENTION THIS CHEERFULLY GODLESS NATION OF OURS IS EVER LIKELY TO SEE. GET READY WITH THOSE Hallelujahs.**



IN THE MEANTIME, IS IT TOO MUCH TO ASK THAT EVERY POLITICIAN VISITING THE FLOODED AREAS MIGHT AT LEAST TAKE A STIRRUP PUMP OR A COUPLE OF BUCKETS?



I TRUST THE FOUL WEATHER HAS NOT INTERRUPTED YOUR DILIGENT SAVE-THE-PLANET ROUTINE OF MAKING SURE THE PLASTIC BOTTLES AND GLASS BOTTLES DO NOT GO IN THE SAME CONTAINER. HAS ANYONE NOTICED HOW MUCH BETTER THE WEATHER WAS BEFORE WHEELIE BINS?



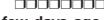
IT'S STATINS ALL-ROUND. THE WONDER-DRUG OF THE CHOLESTEROL AGE IS TO BE PRESCRIBED TO MILLIONS OF BRITS, EVEN THOSE AT RELATIVELY LOW RISK OF HEART ATTACKS. THE AIM, PRESUMABLY, IS TO MAKE US LIVE FOR EVER, OR AT LEAST LONG ENOUGH TO DIE FROM CANCER OR DEMENTIA. PROGRESS, EH?



I LOST COUNT OF HOW MANY TIMES BARCLAYS CHIEF EXECUTIVE ANTONY JENKINS USED HIS BANK'S LATEST BUZZ-WORD ON HIS RADIO 4 INTERVIEW. BARCLAYS PROBABLY PAID THE EARTH FOR SOME CITY PR COMPANY TO DREAM UP THIS MOST VACUOUS OF SLOGANS AND THE INTENSELY IRRITATING MR JENKINS WAS CLEARLY GETTING HIS MONEY'S WORTH. TIME AFTER TIME HE STRESSED THAT BARCLAYS WAS BECOMING "THE GO-TO BANK." IT IS AT MOMENTS LIKE THIS THAT YOU WISH RADIO WERE A TWO-WAY PROCESS AND YOU COULD SAY TO MR JENKINS: "THE VERY NEXT TIME YOU INSULT MY INTELLIGENCE WITH 'THE GO-TO BANK,' I WILL REACH THROUGH THE LOUDSPEAKER AND SLAP YOUR LEGS VERY HARD." JENKINS RATTLED ON: THE GO-TO BANK, THE GO-TO BANK, THE GO-TO BANK. GOT IT? LATER THAT DAY BARCLAYS ANNOUNCED THAT, WHILE THE MILLIONAIRE BOSSSES WERE GETTING ENORMOUS BONUSES, THE BANK WAS MAKING 12,000 MINIONES REDUNDANT. BARCLAYS - THE GO-TO JOBCENTRE BANK.



SO FAREWELL, SHIRLEY TEMPLE, NOT ONLY THE SWEETEST CHILD EVER TO EMERGE FROM HOLLYWOOD BUT ONE OF THE FIRST NAMES I EVER LEARNED. IF YOU WERE A BOY, BORN IN THE 1950S AND HAD A TOUSED SHOCK OF BLONDE CURLS, YOU GOT USED TO THE BIG KIDS ADDRESSING YOU AS: "OI, SHIRLEY BLOODY TEMPLE."



I WROTE FONDLY A FEW DAYS AGO OF THE GOLDEN AGE OF BROADCASTING WHEN INTELLIGENCE AND LEARNING WERE REVERED AND ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR PROGRAMMES WAS THE BRAINS TRUST. A READER OF THE SAME VINTAGE REMINDS ME THAT THIS PERIOD OF TOWERING INTELLECTUAL MAJESTY ALSO FEATURED ARCHIE ANDREWS, A VENTRILLOQUIST ACT ON THE RADIO. THAT'S RIGHT, A VENTRILLOQUIST YOU COULDN'T ACTUALLY SEE. PETER BROUGH MADE A GOOD LIVING TALKING TO A WOODEN PUPPET ON THE RADIO. IT WAS ONLY WHEN HE AND ARCHIE ANDREWS APPEARED ON TELEVISION THAT WE REALISED WHAT A TERRIBLE VENTRILLOQUIST HE WAS. ABSOLUTE GOLLOX.



A CHARITY CALLED BALANCE SAYS THE NORTH EAST IS IN THE GRIP OF AN ALCOHOL EPIDEMIC WHICH IS COSTING THE LOCAL ECONOMY £1.1 BILLION A YEAR. AUNTIE BEEB PROMPTLY DISPATCHES A RADIO CREW TO THE BLIGHTED AREA WHERE THEY FIND DRINKERS (OR "VULNERABLE PEOPLE," AS THE CHARITY CALLS THEM) QUEUING UP FOR THE PUBS TO OPEN AT 8AM AND SINKING SIX OR 10 PINTS BEFORE LUNCH. THE MOST STRIKING THING WAS THAT THESE FOLK DID NOT SOUND VULNERABLE OR EVEN DEPRESSED. THEY ALL SEEMED VERY JOLY.



**DON'T MISS PETER RHODES  
EVERY MONDAY TO FRIDAY IN  
YOUR EXPRESS & STAR**

# Show-off driver gets ban after chase

A DRIVER HAS BEEN HANDED A SUSPENDED PRISON SENTENCE FOLLOWING A CHASE THAT SAW POLICE DRIVING ALMOST 120MPH TO CATCH UP WITH HIM.

Aqeel Altaf, aged 20, was driving a Honda Civic on December 3 when police patrol car spotted him speeding away from traffic lights on the Birmingham New Road.

Wolverhampton Crown Court was shown the footage as the police car was forced to drive at speeds

up to 119mph to keep up. Altaf, of Wassell Road, Norton, had admitted one count of dangerous driving at a previous hearing.

Mr Simon Phillips, prosecuting, said the car was spewing smoke as it pulled away from the lights.

Mr Phillips said: "Police had to undertake a number of road users to catch up with him. They were travelling at around 100mph and did not make much ground on him."

Police caught up with him after around a mile when he stopped at red lights at the junction with Regent Road. Mr Phillips said: "He panicked. He had weaved left and right to try and lose the police."

Mr Anthony Bell, for Altaf, said:

"He fully accepts that his driving was bad. He said he was showing off to his friend, but whatever the reason it was unacceptable. He has lost his job following the interim

ban and has not claimed any state benefits since."

Mr Bell added that no one was hurt or forced to take evasive action during the chase, and no drink or drugs were in his system.

Altaf was given a five-month sentence suspended for 18 months and ordered to carry out 200 hours unpaid work. He was disqualified from driving for two years and ordered to pay £340 costs and £80 surcharge.

# Wheelchair-bound attacker 'lost control'

A WHEELCHAIR-BOUND MAN HAS BEEN GIVEN A SUSPENDED PRISON SENTENCE AFTER HOLDING A KNIFE TO A MAN'S THROAT AND SLASHING A WOMAN'S THUMB.

Ian Hadley admitted two counts of actual bodily harm at Wolverhampton Crown Court.

The court heard that Hadley had been at a friend's house when her ex-partner arrived and an altercation occurred on September 27, 2011. The injured parties, John Rollinson and Chelsina Thomas, had been outside the house when Hadley went outside with a kitchen knife.

Mr Simon Phillips, prosecuting, said Hadley called over Mr Rollinson before putting the knife to his throat. He said: "Miss Thomas tried to intervene and sustained a substantial cut on her thumb. Mr Rollinson tried to grab the knife and cut both his hands. Mr Rollinson's injuries were not serious but Miss Thomas required surgery... and will suffer from a loss of sensation in her thumb."

Hadley told police he had been out drinking and had gone back to his friend's house when her former partner turned up. He said Mr Rollinson, son of the former partner, and his girlfriend, Miss Thomas, had been shouting threats and abuse.

Hadley, 45, of Oliver Close, Kates Hill, said he had concealed the knife and used it in self-defence.

Judge John Wait said: "You are a man who is prone to losing your self control and on this day you lost your self control again, no doubt because you had been drinking. You did not acknowledge responsibility for what you have done and delayed proceedings over two years and it was only on the day of the trial when you showed any acknowledgement at all."

Hadley was given a 14-month sentence suspended for 18 months. He was also given a curfew to stay at his home between 7pm and 6am, and ordered to pay £500 costs.

Judge Wait also ordered a restraining order, preventing Hadley from contacting Mr Rollinson and Miss Thomas, and not allowing him within 100 metres of their addresses.

## Typhoon relief evening

CHAIRMAN OF THE WEST MIDLANDS BRANCH OF THE INSTITUTE OF DIRECTORS, JASON WOUHRA, IS HOSTING A GALA EVENING WITH THE HOPE OF RAISING MORE THAN £50,000 TO AID VICTIMS OF TYPHOOON HAIYAN WHICH DEVASTATED THE PHILIPPINES THREE MONTHS AGO.

Jason, a director of West Bromwich-based East End Foods, and his musician brother, Indi Wouhra, are hoping that local businesses will support the dinner being held on Saturday at Birmingham's International Convention Centre. Tickets cost £1,500 for a table or £150 per head and Jason can be contacted on 0121 359 2199.

## Jack is back for the beer



Jack Jones is celebrating his 106th Birthday at Tudor Manor Care Home, Stourbridge

JACK JONES WHO WILL MARK HIS 106TH BIRTHDAY BY CALLING IN AT HIS OLD LOCAL AND TOASTING THE LANDMARK WITH A FREE HALF-PINT OF BITTER.

JACK WAS AWARDED A COMMEMORATIVE WEEKLY DRINK BY STAFF AT THE GREYHOUND IN STOURBRIDGE FOLLOWING HIS 101ST BIRTHDAY BUT SINCE MOVING INTO A CARE HOME LAST YEAR THE FORMER VAN DRIVER HAS BEEN UNABLE TO CLAIM HIS FREE TIPPEE.

After turning 106 this week, bosses at

TUDOR MANOR CARE HOME ARE ARRANGING A TREAT FOR THE ALBION FAN TO VISIT THE PUB.

"IT WILL BE FANTASTIC," SAID JACK, WHO HAS LIVED IN STOURBRIDGE ALL HIS LIFE.

NISCHAL PRITCHARD, MANAGER AT THE CARE HOME IN BROOK STREET, SAID: "GOING TO THE PUB WAS SOMETHING HE ENJOYED DOING AND WE THOUGHT IT'D BE GREAT FOR HIM TO GO BACK DOWN THERE FOR A MEAL AND A DRINK TO MARK HIS BIRTHDAY."

## A tweet idea to encourage the birds

KEEPERS AT DUDLEY ZOO ARE INVITING CHILDREN TO HELP CARE FOR SOME OF THE SITE'S WILD BIRDS THIS WEEK.

HASFELD TERM VISITORS WILL BE ABLE TO DECORATE A NEST BOX IN THE DISCOVERY CENTRE, WHICH STAFF WILL FIX TO TREES AROUND THE ZOO'S 40-ACRE WOODED HILLSIDE TO ENHANCE THE POPULATION OF NATIVE BIRDS.

BIRDS SECTION LEADER KELLY PIPER SAID: "WE'VE GOT HUNDREDS OF SMALL WILD BIRDS AROUND THE ZOO SITE INCLUDING CHAFFINCHES, ROBINS, BLUE TITS, LONG TAIL TITS AND NUTHATCHES, WHICH ALL NEED TO FIND PLACES TO NEST IN THE COMING WEEKS."

### Nesting

"WITH MANY OF THEIR NATURAL NESTING SITES FAST DISAPPEARING IT IS VITAL WE PROVIDE SUITABLE BOXES THAT ARE SAFE AND WARM FOR THEM TO START LAYING THEIR EGGS IN."

THE FREE ACTIVITY WILL COINCIDE WITH NATIONAL NEST BOX WEEK, WHERE BIRD LOVERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO ADD NEST BOXES INTO THEIR GARDENS.

CHILDREN WILL BE ABLE TO PAINT THEIR BOX IN CAMOUFLAGE COLOURS, TO HELP DETECT PREDATORS, WHICH, ONCE DRY, WILL BE VARNISHED AND FIXED TO SUITABLE TREES AROUND THE SITE.

## Firm's move creates jobs

A SOFT TEXTILES MANUFACTURER HAS CREATED SEVEN JOBS BY MOVING TO NEW PREMISES.

MISSES DAISY'S, WHICH MAKES PILLOWS, CUSHIONS AND DRAUGHT EXCLUDERS, MOVED IN JANUARY TO A 14,500 SQ FT SITE IN PEARTREE LANE, DUDLEY. MANAGING DIRECTOR SEAN SMITH SAID THE COMPANY NOW EMPLOYED 27 PEOPLE FOLLOWING THE MOVE FROM ITS WHOLESALE WAREHOUSE IN DUDLEY PORT.

THE FOUR-YEAR-OLD BUSINESS WAS STARTED BY HIS WIFE BEVERLEY SELLING ON THE INTERNET. IT IS ABOUT TO INVEST IN A NEW MACHINE THAT WILL TAKE INVESTMENT IN THE NEW SITE TO MORE THAN £200,000.

## Grants for grabs

COMMUNITY GROUPS CAN APPLY FOR A SLICE OF A FUNDING POT RUN BY A COACH COMPANY. THE NATIONAL EXPRESS FOUNDATION AWARDS THOUSANDS OF POUNDS TO GROUPS WORKING WITH THE YOUNG. APPLICATIONS MUST BE IN BY MARCH 28. SEE WWW.NATIONALEXPRESSFOUNDATION.PRESSGROUP.COM/FUNDATION

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## Centre is location for heart life-saver

A LIFE-SAVING defibrillator which can help to revive heart attack victims has been installed at a shopping centre.

The new equipment, installed at The Ryemarke in Stourbridge, has been purchased through St John Ambulance with funds raised by members of the Kidderminster and Stourbridge Lions group.

It will also be used to train 12 people to use the equipment. St John Ambulance will provide the training at a total cost of £1,600.

The defibrillator has been installed at a central location on a pillar close to the Home Bargains store.

Ryemarke staff including manager Kelley Dyas and staff at Costa Coffee, Hallmark, Waitrose and Carphone Warehouse are being trained to use the equipment. Police are trained in its use. A defibrillator delivers an electric shock to the heart when someone is in cardiac arrest.

Mrs Dyas said: "I approached the Lions last year to discuss the possibility of working together on securing the funding and they agreed that it would be a worthwhile cause that would benefit the community."

## Brothers deny brawl charges

THREE brothers have appeared in court accused of taking part in a pub brawl, which allegedly involved a pool ball being thrown and a cue brandished as a weapon.

Anthony, Patrick and Thomas Doherty all denied affray when they appeared at Sandwell Magistrates' Court in connection with a fight in the Shireland, Smethwick, on January 7. Anthony, 29, and Patrick, 33, live in High Street, Brierley Hill. Thomas, 25, lives in Wynn-Griffith Drive, Tipton.

They were bailed to appear at Wolverhampton Crown Court on May 6.

## Death inquiry

AN inquiry into the death of a man who took a cocktail of drugs has been adjourned. Darren Wooldridge, aged 43, of Spring Meadow Road, Dudley, died at Russells Hall Hospital on April 2. His family asked for evidence from the mental health service which looked after him.

# Wages £20,000 a year short of house prices

PEOPLE on average wages in some parts of the West Midlands would need to earn more than £20,000 extra a year to keep up with soaring house prices.

New research by the housing charity Shelter reveals that wage increases have fallen dramatically behind rising house prices over the past 16 years.

A single person in the Black Country would need on average a salary of £37,399 to afford the same house they could have bought in the 1990s on the equivalent wages of the time.

A worker in the Black Country would need to earn a further £15,389 on top of the

average £22,010 a year salary just to keep up with the increase in house prices.

Dudley North MP Ian Austin said: "I helped get funds for new homes that have been built on Priory Road, the Wrens Nest and in Gornal, but that's still not enough for huge demand. The Government needs to step in and commit to building more houses."

### Derelict

"I want the Government to make an ambitious commitment to building 200,000 new homes and I want as many as possible of those to replace derelict land in Dudley."

Natasha Millward, Labour's candidate

for Dudley South said: "The Help to Buy Scheme pumps up demand but does nothing to increase housing supply. As a result house prices rocket sky high, and people get shunted into the private rental sector. In turn, increased demand for rented homes, triggers higher rents."

Campbell Robb, chief executive of Shelter, said: "When you need to more than double your salary just to keep up with rising house prices, it is no surprise that the dream of a home of their own is slipping further out of reach for a generation."

"Politicians need to start meeting people halfway by committing to bold solutions

that will get more affordable homes built. Otherwise future generations will find themselves priced out of a stable home, however hard they work or save."

"The reality is that successive governments have failed to build the affordable homes that this country needs. As a result our housing shortage has reached crisis point."

"Pumping money into mortgage guarantee schemes is not the solution. This further inflates prices by increasing demand for an already limited number of homes, and will only make things worse. The only solution is to build more affordable homes."

## NEWS in brief

### Childminding help is required

A RECRUITMENT campaign has been launched to find new childminders.

Dudley Council says there is a shortage of people taking up the vital caring roles.

The authority is looking for residents interested in providing a quality child-minding service to contact them. Running a childminding service requires the individual to be self-employed, complete background checks and meet minimum legal standards. The council offers training. Contact 01384 818121.

### Variety show for mayor's charities

A VARIETY show in aid of charity will take place next month at Parkes Hall Social Club in Dudley.

The evening on March 14 features Tony Gold with eight acts including various singers. Mayor of Dudley Councillor Alan Finch said: "I hope to see lots of people there on the night for what promises to be a great night out."

Proceeds from the event will go to the Mayor of Dudley's charities. Tickets cost £3 from the club in advance or by calling Tony on 07909 886591.

### Hospice calling for run pledges

FIT residents can raise cash for a hospice by taking part in the British 10k London Run. Stourbridge's Mary Stevens Hospice has six guaranteed places in the event which will take place on July 13.

People who want to take up one of the places should submit a pledge of expected sponsorship and full contact details to vicki@msh fundraising.co.uk

### Training to get industrial work

A COLLEGE is hoping to help boost manufacturing industry with a special training programme. City of Wolverhampton College launched its Preparing to Work in the Engineering and Manufacturing Industry course in response to a revival in the sector. Jobless people should ask at the Jobcentre for a referral or contact 01902 837198.

### Collection boost

A COLLECTION at a Christmas carol concert at Kingswinford School brought in a total of £191 for charities, to be divided between the Against Breast Cancer Charity and The Children's Society.

# Cloudy2Clear Windows – Service With A Smile!

It's been a crazy few months for Cloudy2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has grown rapidly as homeowners take advantage of their services.

Managing Director Brian Stanley feels that it's all about service. "Our product is simple. If your double glazing is misted up we can replace the glass at a fraction of the cost of a new window, in any type of frame, and with a new 5 year guarantee. But it's not just about saving people

money, although that obviously helps. Many tradespeople have struggled since last year and I honestly feel that during the good times a minority perhaps didn't focus on customer care as much as they should have done."

We make sure we turn up when we say we will, do the job the customer requires and leave their house as clean as a whistle. I often get comments back from customers on how they really didn't expect that sort of service which, in a way, is very sad for the service industry as a whole."

Cloudy2Clear service Wolverhampton and the surrounding

I've done work for, which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated."

So, if your windows are steamed up, broken or damaged give Brian a call for a free quotation on 0800 61 21 118 and he'll be happy to help!"



### ADVERTISEMENT

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**NEWS FEATURE****IN MY VIEW**WITH  
MARK  
ANDREWS

AS public stunts go, it is rather impressive. A 7ft by 12ft statue of a hedgehog has been installed in south London to promote David Attenborough's new TV series.

The life-like structure, placed in Clapham Common, took more than two months to create, and with 2,000 soft wood spikes, it is actually larger than a rhinoceros.

You hate to think what effect it will have on the drunks stumbling across it while taking the short-cut from the pub, especially when they try to explain the experience to their angry wives waiting at home.

"What? You've seen a 12ft hedgehog in the park? You'll be telling me next you're late because you bumped into George Michael."

□□□□

NICK Clegg, don't you just love him? The esteemed Deputy Prime Minister's latest approach is that a fresh approach is needed with regard to drug-related crime, because the war on drugs is being lost.

And let's face it he's right. Anybody who thinks there is any chance of winning the battle against drugs needs only to take a trip to their local magistrates court for a reality check. Day in, day out, our courts are occupied by a non-stop procession of twitching, paranoid junkies shuffling their way into the courtrooms, chuntering obscenities to themselves as they fidget and fumble in their seats.

But if we are going to be seriously honest about this, governments don't have a great track record when it comes to winning the war on many crimes.

Okay, Mr Clegg will no doubt point to the success Britain has in dealing with the serious stuff, you know, like not wearing a seatbelt or smoking in the pub. But when it comes to the more bread-and-butter offences, the perpetrators seem to have a woefully unhealthy disregard for authority.

For example, does Mr Clegg seriously think any government is going to truthfully be able to say it has 'made burglary history'? Or that a future Liberal Democrat government would be able to 'win the war on murder'?

The reality is that it is pretty well impossible to 'win the war' on any major crime, surely that does not mean we should throw in the towel and accept defeat. Are we now to turn a blind eye to street robbery or tax evasion, simply because those who are criminally inclined demonstrate a reluctance to change their ways?

Still, it was good to see that the Deputy Prime Minister decided to make his announcement in Columbia. You can just imagine half the country's drug barons nodding sagely in agreement: "I agree with Nick."



3Mercian commanding officer Lt Col Chris Davies



First tour has been life-changing says Pte Plummer



Pte Ashley Plummer secures the base's front gate

**THROUGH THE YEARS****1984**

A 60-year-old vicar born above a grocery shop in Wolverhampton presided over Elton John's wedding to Renata Blauel. Canon James Whild was the man to oversee the eccentric pop star's marriage to Renata Blauel in a ceremony in Sydney, Australia. Before emigrating in 1956, Mr Whild, who was born in Dudley Road, Wolverhampton, had been curate at St Luke's Church in Blakenhall.

WEST Midland transport chief Phil Bateman was attacked as he went to the aid of a man being beaten in a pub brawl. Councillor Bateman, chairman of West Midlands public transport committee, was punched, butted and showered with glass as beer mugs were hurled at him in the Turks Head in Lancaster Circus, Birmingham. He had sprung to the defence of a man who was attacked while phoning for help following an assault on a woman.

**1994**

A NAKED man brought a Wednesday keep-fit class to a standstill when he burst in and began performing obscene acts to the music in front of 60 shocked women. Some of the class at the leisure centre were upset, but others were unable to control their laughter. Police were unable to get a description of the man as few had been looking at his face.

THE wheels came off a day out for the Goodyear Pensioners' Club - literally. The coach carrying retired workers from the Wolverhampton tyre plant shed two of its wheels while travelling along the M6 in Warwickshire, just two hours after passing its MOT. The driver managed to steer the vehicle to the hard shoulder, and another coach picked the group up to take them to the Walt Disney ice show in London.

**2004**

THE price of a pint of beer around the West Midlands was going up by 10p, following a shock rise by the brewers of Carling, Worthington and Grolsch. Wolverhampton-based Banks's also increased the price of its beer by 3p a pint, blaming soaring production costs.

GLAMOUR model Jordan emerged from the I'm A Celebrity jungle, declaring she was totally besotted with fellow contestant Peter Andre. She said her feelings for former boyfriend Stuart were crushed the moment she met the Mysterious Girl singer, whose picture she had on her wall as a child.

DEPUTY Prime Minister John Prescott was in Wolverhampton to launch the city's flagship Market Square development.

# Last hurrah for 3Mercian troops

**Black Country and Staffs soldiers are ending their last tour in Afghanistan. JOHN SCOTT reports**

**SOLDIERS** from our region will march into the military history books with pride on their return from their last hurrah in Afghanistan, their Commanding Officer has promised.

The 3rd Battalion Mercian Regiment (3Mercian) – formerly the Staffords – will parade along streets where they have been granted the freedom of a town or city this summer after their current tour of duty on the frontline, which is the last before the battalion is disbanded as part of plans to cut the strength of the regular army.

Lieutenant Colonel Chris Davies, the commander, promised: "We will go out with flags unfurled and drums beating as the last battalion of the Mercian Regiment ever to serve in Afghanistan. The deployment has gone better than we could have envisaged and leaves a lasting legacy that will sit proudly alongside the achievements of those who served before us in both this battalion and their predecessor The Staffords."

**Sadness**

But there is deep sadness over the loss of Sgt Major Ian Fisher. The former Staffordshire University student from Essex, a 42-year-old father-of-two, was killed in a suicide bomb attack. Lt Col Davies said: "This was a really massive blow for the battalion. Despite that they have done well and are in a good place.

"We have to go through the disbandment after our return but we understand the reasons for that and know the regular army has got to be reduced in size."

The companies involved – A and C –



From left: LCpl Matt Bradley, Pte Tom Wright, Pte Dean Williams and LCpl Matty Hill

have been operating from two of only four bases outside Camp Bastion currently used by British combat troops. A few years ago there were 137. The last act of both will be to close their respective base for good, Camp Price near Gereshk and Lashkar Gah Durai in Nahr-e Saraj.

Lt Col Davies said: "Neither have any creature comforts left. It is now basic soldiering, living on the extremes but there is no requirement for them to be forward any more because the Afghan security forces have control."

Both are expected to be pulling back

to Camp Bastion in the near future with A Company, who are based at Lashkar Gah Durai and came out to Afghanistan first, leading the return home. All the 3Mercian troops will be back by summer.

As they ate at Camp Price, members

of C Company each took away a brick along with their paper plate and plastic cutlery after every meal.

Lance Corporal Matty Hill, a 29-year-old father-of-three who lives with wife Emma in Gornal, is on his second tour of duty on the frontline in Helmand Province. He said: "Taking the brick

out every time we had a meal meant everyone did their fair share rather than leaving it to a few to do all the work. You don't really mind because every time something disappears it means we are closer to going home."

The proposed eight or nine-month deployment is now expected to barely last six in most cases.

Private Ashley Plummer, 22, whose parents live in Bilbrook, revealed: "This is my first tour and it has been life-changing. A geezer who looked 75 arrived at the gates wanting medical assistance after he and some younger lads had been wounded in fighting. He had been hit in the head with shrapnel. My grandfather is the same age."

The former lifeguard at Dudley Baths added: "It is an important tour because it is the last by 3Mercian and we will all finish it together."

Lance Corporal Matt Bradley, a 29-year-old father-of-three from Gornal who is engaged to partner Louise, is on his second Afghan tour. He is in the Quick Reaction Force, which rushes to help Afghan troops. He said: "Luckily we have not got in any scrapes. It is a lot quieter than last time. They have been totally different tours but both have been equally challenging."

Private Dean Williams, 24, from Upper Gornal, now hopes to join the Paras. He said: "It is sad that 3Mercian is disbanding after this. We have bonded as a group and got to know each other really well. Now we will be split up. I only joined this battalion because of its connection to The Staffords, which it replaced, but now that link with the local community could be lost."

The troops and their families will leave Germany and move to join either 1Mercian in Bulford or 2Mercian at Chester. There will be an emotional homecoming for 3Mercian when they exercise their right to march through places in the West Midlands where they have been granted the freedom to do so, for one last time. The battalion's colours will be laid up in Lichfield Cathedral beside those of the Staffordshire Regiment.

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**LETTERS****OAPs deserve better than IDS plans**

IAN Duncan Smith has said that if the Conservatives get in in 2015 (they only got in last time with the help of the Lib Dems), he is going to stop pensioners' fuel allowance, bus passes and we will all have to pay for a television licence.

He also said that nothing will be ring-fenced anymore.

I hope, if this happens, it also applies to the millions of pounds that we send

**It's time to stop the foreign aid**

NIGEL Farage is quite right in calling for foreign aid to be diverted to help our own stricken countrymen and women.

Now MPs are belatedly echoing Mr Farage's plea.

Whenever a tragedy happens overseas the British public put their hands in their pockets, pull out their cheque books and give with generous hearts.

Our successive governments have happily put their hands in our pockets again and given British money to foreign regimes — and these are often corrupt foreign regimes.

Enough is enough.

Cut foreign aid and use the money to alleviate the suffering of our own folk.

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abroad in aid every year to countries that have more money than we do.

This pitiful excuse for a Government has already let the fuel companies exploit this country with sky-high bills, so that it is not only pensioners who can't afford to warm their homes but people with young families and one parent families as well.

Food bills are rising so we can't afford to eat but, if we could afford to eat, we can't get to the shops because IDS is going to stop our bus passes.

Not every pensioner can afford, or drive, a car.

Most pensioners can't afford a TV licence, so will not be able to watch TV.

If you are sick, because this pathetic Government has stopped bus passes you will not be able to get to hospital and, if you do manage to, because the Conservatives have decimated the NHS by cutting staff levels, you will probably have to wait hours to be seen and not get the treatment you require.

I and many like me (I am 75) have worked hard all our lives, brought our families up, never claimed benefits, always paid NI and taxes — and we deserve better.

**J GARFIELD**  
Halesowen

**Letters to the Editor**

**POST**

Dudley Chronicle,  
Chronicle Editorial,  
51-53 Queen Street,  
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

**E-MAIL**

Dudley.chron@  
expressandstar.co.uk

## Halt HS2 and use money to halt floods

FLOODING defences are the main priority for this country.

Lord Smith from the Environment Agency states that we may have to choose between which we want to protect from flooding, homes or Countryside as there isn't a bottomless money pit.

I say to Lord Smith there shouldn't have to be a choice. If this is to be the norm in the future, due to climate change, we may be having this problem of flooding every year. To me this has to be one of the main priorities for this country in this coming decade.

I'll tell Mr Smith and David Cameron where to find the money. To halt the programme on the HS2 and use the £80bn pounds on flooding defences for this country.

Having seen the devastating amount of flooding in parts of the country, surely this has to be one of the priorities.

B WHITEHOUSE  
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Agency is just not up to scratch

PLEASE, could someone get the Environment Agency to wake up to its responsibility?

On Sunday we decided to go for a trip by car just to get a breath of fresh air. Being responsible we looked on the Flood Line to check where we should avoid. Surprise, surprise the warnings page was unavailable, due to 'problems'.

We live in the Black Country but we totally sympathise with those on the Somerset Levels, who have been ignored by those who are paid very well to do a job.

Perhaps the floods have to be in the South East of the country for people to get the service they deserve?

Even the 0845 number was a total mistake by those in charge.

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Tom and comrades at barracks in Hampshire in 1939



Tom, aged 23, centre, with fellow trainee paras, in September, 1942



Tom Hicks pictured during a return to Arnhem in 2007



Soldier, soldier – Tom in his paratrooper's uniform, aged 23

# Arnhem — Tom's memories of the battle for a bridge too far

by Mark Andrews

**THE** memories of the battle of Arnhem of Sapper Tom Hicks, who served in the 1st Parachute Squadron, are brought to life in a memoir written by his son Norman, of Kinver.

The memoir, based on personal diaries and taped recollections, paints a dramatic picture of what it was like for thousands of young men who took part in the ill-fated attempt to capture the bridge across the River Rhine in 1944.

## Determination

Tom, who is now 94, describes his descent onto the landing zone at Renkum, around seven miles from Arnhem: "It took as little as 20 seconds to reach the ground and an immediate awareness came over you as you took in what was happening around and above you," he says. "Men, containers and loose debris were still rapidly descending. Looking up, the canopies were still falling around me presenting a colourful sight."

Tom's participation in Arnhem was the result of his determination to participate in the war effort. As a locomotive driver, he was in a reserved occupation and when he applied to join the Commandos he was refused leave from his railway duties. However, he then applied to join the paras, and they were told nobody could refuse to release anybody who had applied for the paras," says his son Norman, himself a 65-year-old former RAF man.

Tom tells of how he was filled with confidence when he, along with 2,277 other paratroopers, landed at Renkum on September 17, 1944. Almost immediately it became apparent that things were not going to plan.

Only half the Reconnaissance Squadron Jeeps arrived due to several gliders failing to make it. It was five hours before the British troops reached the key bridge over the Rhine and they were only able to control the northern end. They found themselves surrounded by German troops. Most of the group that Tom had been with during

the clean-up operation at the drop zone had been killed or injured. "It was obvious to us that things were beginning to fall apart," he says.

Tom had already received a shrapnel wound to the back of his neck and during the sixth day he was hit in almost exactly the same place. "I lost the sensation in my legs and I could feel the blood running down my back," he says.

He was taken by stretcher to a house which had been converted into a makeshift first-aid station. For Tom this would mean the end of the fighting. On September 24 a medical officer came in and told the injured men that the division would be retreating across the river and that the wounded would be left behind for the Germans to take prisoner.

"I lay on the floor for two days, during which time the house was hit by shell fire several times, and some of the wounded were wounded again," says Tom. "Men were moaning and some were screaming."

On September 26, the Germans announced their arrival by poking the gun of a

tank through the window of the house. "Ha! I am the gunner of this tank, the best tank in the world," sneered the young crewman.

An SS officer then came into the room, accompanied by three other soldiers, and inquired about the welfare of an injured SS sergeant lying next to Tom. "I could tell he was asking if we had treated him well," recalls Tom.

"Ja, ja," he replied, pointing at me and repeating, 'komrad, komrad', explaining that I had given him water." The SS officer surprised Tom by shaking his hand.

Tom was taken to the Stalag XIB Prisoner of War camp. "Two of my mates came into see me before they were due to attempt to break out," Tom remembers. "They left with a wave and a final 'see you Tom, when we get home'." One of those friends was Allan 'Wakey' Wake, a 19-year-old. He was shot trying to make his escape across a river — one of more than 15,000 young men who would never return.

**Captured At Arnhem, from Railwayman to Paratrooper, is published by Pen & Sword Books, priced £25.**

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## NEWS

# Timber shop closing after 42 years trading

IT began with a small shop lined up for partial demolition and expanded into a three-store firm employing 14 people.

But now owner Peter Webb is closing down his beloved business and is looking forward to his first holiday in 14 years.

The 69-year-old says he 'thoroughly enjoyed' his time running Swinford Timber Supplies since opening the company's first shop in Hagley Road in Oldswinford, Stourbridge, with friend John Bangham in 1972. But his age, combined with increasing red tape, has made this year the right time to retire.

"The first thing I will do is take a holiday," said the former Longlands pupil, who joined the timber supply trade straight from school aged 16. "It's been 14 years since I took a break. Now I feel it is the best time to step down and close the business."

"I also find its becoming more difficult over the years, what with the continuous Government ideas which seem to get in the way. Ten years ago, someone came on the site and told me I needed to be wearing gloves for the saw."

Mr Webb was born in West Hagley to Harry and Annie, owners of Webbs Bakery in Worcester Road.

He began work at a timber shop in Market Street in Stourbridge and then at a store in Church Street. Then, at the age of 27, he opened a shop with friend Mr Bangham in Hagley Road, Oldswinford.

But Dudley Council told him they were to bring the front of the shop down within five years as part of a project to widen Hagley Road. He said: "We went ahead with it anyway and luckily the plan never materialised."

After five years Mr Webb took sole ownership, expanded the firm and



Owner Peter Webb with his wife Jill outside Swinford Timber Supplies



Owner Peter Webb with his son Baron who also works in the shop

moved it two doors up the street, while opening a convenience store in the former shop. He then knocked through the rear of the store to increase the size before opening another shop in Wollaston in 1984. At its height, the company employed 14 people across its branches.

Today it stands as one small shop in Hagley Road, run by Mr Webb and his son Baron, 39.

Mr Webb said: "We have always looked to be as helpful as possible to our customers and I think they have appreciated it. It is that I will most miss when I retire, the chat and banter with customers. I'd like to thank them for their support."

Mr Webb has agreed the sale of the store, expected to close in March. Dudley Council granted permission to turn the shop into a tearoom.

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## Terraces get major revamp

WORK on a £500,000 scheme to spruce up Victorian terraced houses in a Dudley street is moving forward with the first tenants now moving back into their new-look homes.

Jephson Homes Housing Association, with support from Dudley Council, has been working on the nine-month project to revamp homes in Stourbridge Road, Holly Hall.

Seventeen three-storey houses that were converted into bedsits and small flats in the early 1980s are being modernised. They are also being reconfigured into a mix of properties ranging from one-bedroom flats to five-bedroom family houses.

The work, being carried out by contractor Bullock, includes fitting of new windows, roof upgrades and improvement of frontages. The properties are being insulated.

# School's academy status move halted at 11th hour

A SCHOOL in Stourbridge has been forced to freeze plans to become an academy after the Government withdrew financial support at the eleventh hour.

Ridgewood High School headteacher Clive Nutting said the school would be reviewing its proposal to achieve academy status at the end of the school year following the set-back.

Having been given the go-ahead by the Department for Education at the end of 2012, the

school carried out a consultation with parents and staff before governors made a decision to convert into an academy. But the school has received notification from education bosses that it would not be entering a funding agreement 'at this time', leaving no option but to call the move off before reviewing the situation this summer.

It is believed part of the reason is an impending Ofsted inspection but Mr Nutting admitted he was unsure exactly what criteria was now being applied. He said: "There is frustration that it appears there has been a changing of the goal posts and we are no longer sure what exactly they want."

"We were given the go-ahead by the department at the end of 2012 but from that time the criteria set by ministers seems to have changed and as a result we received notification that they would not be signing the funding agreement at this time. We had got everything in place for February 1 and were waiting for it to be signed off."

The governors have decided in the interests of the school we defer the process in order to reflect and review the situation at the end of the school year. We have exams coming up and we want everyone focused on what they are doing. We don't want uncertainty at the school."

## Xara will go to ladies' college



**Head girl Xara Davies 16, with Four Dwellings vice principal Ian Trevethick**

HEAD girl Xara Davies may come from an 'ordinary' Black Country family but now she's won a free place at one of the world's leading independent schools.

The 16-year-old from Dudley, who attends Four Dwellings Academy in Quinton, is predicted to gain A\* and A grades in her GCSEs, passed rigorous entrance exams to get into the sixth form at Cheltenham Ladies' College.

After shining at her interviews there, she was offered a fully funded bursary for the college, where fees are normally more than £30,000 a year.

Vice principal at Four Dwellings Academy Ian Trevethick, who came up with the idea for her to apply to the top college, said: "Xara is a bit of a special girl. She's very talented and deserves the chance to excel."

Xara is not the first Four Dwellings pupil

to win a free place at a top public school. In 2010 Jake Hayden-Wright went to Eton.

## Professor to give lecture on China

A RENOWNED Oxford professor will visit a school to give a lecture on Chinese history and culture.

Professor Barend J. ter Haar will deliver his Run Run Shaw lecture at Stourbridge's Oldswinford Hospital School on March 7.

It will run from 6.30pm to 8pm and is open to the public.

The event will throw a spotlight on Chinese culture - taking in topics such as its history, language and identity. Professor Haar teaches Chinese studies at the University of Oxford, with a strong focus on cultural and religious history.

Seats can be reserved by calling the school on 01384 817300.

Donations will be collected at the end of the evening for the China-Britain Youth Association.

The lecture will close the programme of events for Mandarin Enrichment Day at the school.

**£1 tickets for children**

CHILDREN can travel across the West Midlands for just £1 per day with their grandparents this month.

The 'kids for a quid' ticket has been introduced by National Express West Midlands during half-term.

The ticket can be bought from the driver and gives anyone under 16, travelling with an OAP concessionary pass holder, a day's unlimited travel for £1. The offer is valid after 9.30am every day until Sunday and also attracts two-for-one tickets for several attractions.

## Raise the roof at music night

THEIR motto is always be prepared but members of a scout group no longer want to have to use a mop and bucket to clean up pools of water in their hut.

A fundraising drive has been launched by the group to help pay more than £4,500 towards a new roof on their scout hut. Around 70 children attend beaver, cub and scout clubs at the 1st Bromley Pensnett Scout group each week.

Their hut in Pensnett is in need of repair as rain water keeps seeping through the roof as felt lining has come away.

The scout group have already started to apply for grants and leaders have joined the children to organise a musical fundraising event tonight at Pensnett Social Welfare Club, in Commodity, starting at 7.30pm. Tickets cost £4 adults and £2 children. For tickets or to help call 07955 862059.

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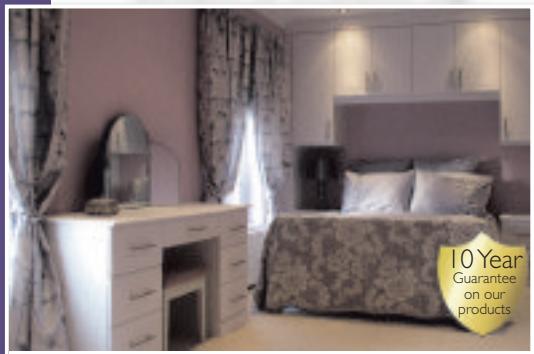
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## NEWS

## Fairytale couple are to slim for cancer charity

IT was a fairytale wedding to remember — Shrek and Princess Fiona tying the knot in front of more than 100 people at a ceremony and raising thousands of pounds for charity.

But now the couple who dressed up as the characters for their movie-themed wedding want to go a step further in their fund-raising mission and lose weight this year to bring in even more cash for Cancer Research UK.

Nathan and Amanda Gibbs, of Kingswinford, were married at Dudley's Priory Hall in December but following their honeymoon and a belt-busting Christmas, the Larch Road couple are determined to shed 15 stone between them.

## Ironing

The couple, who run ironing business The Iron Maidens, raised almost £4,000 for the cancer charity at their film-themed wedding. About 120 guests turned up for the ceremony and reception at The Old Courthouse in Kingswinford, many also dressed in fairytale costumes.

But now the pair aim to double their current fund-raising total after embarking on their weight-loss project, which will last until the end of this year. They are raising money for the cancer charity after they lost seven customers in 12 months to the disease. A total of 23 customers have been impacted by cancer.

Mr Gibbs, 39, who has been given a free year pass at Paragon Fitness in Kingswinford, aims to lose 10 stone.

He said: "When we thought about it we couldn't believe how many people we knew who were impacted by cancer, so we decided to try and do something about it.



Nathan Gibbs and Amanda Billington getting married as Shrek and Princess Fiona



Nathan Gibb, seen with wife Amanda, is helping charity with a sponsored slim

"It started as a head-shave by Amanda and then, from initially deciding to have a small wedding ceremony, we went for the Shrek-themed wedding. It came to us because we always joked we would never get married but if we did I would be Shrek and Amanda would be Princess Fiona."

"Then, when watching the film one day, we said let's do it."

"Losing weight for charity is just another way we want to raise money, while also getting healthy."

"Amanda has already made a good start. By raising cash at the same time is a good way to push us on."

Mrs Gibbs, 44, has already lost a stone since beginning a daily walking regime from the start of the year. She said: "We both aim to double the amount raised from the wedding. We've already had £300 come in."

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## CLUB NEWS

### Quiz held to replace the speaker

GRANGE 'E' GUILD

THE monthly meeting of Grange 'E' Guild was held at Grange Court, Stourbridge on Tuesday February 4.

In the absence of the chairman Hazel Smith, Jill Attwood read the minutes of the previous meeting which were approved and signed. Jill then presented an up-to-date financial report.

Secretary Jean Williams had received thank you cards from members of West Midlands Federation and Oldswinford Guild who had attended the Christmas party saying how much they had enjoyed the evening.

Marlene O'Hanlon informed members that the next meeting of the Luncheon Club would be held at the Hollybush on Monday, March 10.

There was no speaker for the evening but one of the members, Jackie Hill, held a quiz which everyone enjoyed it with all members receiving a small gift. Thanks were given to Jackie for providing the questions.

Tea, coffee and biscuits were served by our hostess for the evening, Joan Biddestone.

The next meeting on March 4 will be the AGM to be followed by a fish and chip supper.

The guild are recruiting for new members and visitors will be made most welcome.

For further information please contact secretary Jean Williams on 01384 832439.

## Ladies bring items close to their hearts



KINGSWINFORD TG

THE February meeting was very busy. The club welcomed three visitors, a new member and a member from the former Wall Heath Guild, who has decided to join.

The usual formal business being completed, names were taken for those wishing to go to the St George's Day celebration in April and for volunteers for the Federation quiz.

In an unusual evening, members were invited to bring items dear to their hearts and explain why they were so special – husbands were excluded.

There was a wide variety of things dolls, flags, a quilt, a dolls cot, even a meerschaum pipe. The reasons why they were so special were not necessarily obvious but they had constant a thread of love, family or sheer goodness of heart running through them.

This was followed by a bring and buy sale. Chris Groves won the raffle.

The next meeting is the AGM in the Community Centre on March 10. John Sparry will be the speaker.

John Sparry will be the guest speaker at the next meeting

## Old friends kick off new year

CLINT GARDENING CLUB

songs. The club began 2014 off with the AGM where the chairman Pat Orme and treasurer Julian Traves were voted in for a further 12 months. Secretary Janet Babb was replaced by Anne Hunt.

The club has a full programme for 2014 beginning on February 28 with Rob and Diane Cole, old friends of the club, with a talk entitled "Look at That".

\*pictures are for illustration purposes only

## NEWS

# Cartoon capers just ticket for commuter

**WHAT** do you do to entertain yourself during the daily slog to and from work?

Perhaps you get stuck into a good book, read the paper, furiously try to smash your high score on Flappy Bird or maybe you have a snooze.

But one talented illustrator has found a new way to kill time on his train commute - by turning his fellow travellers into cartoon characters.

University of Wolverhampton graduate animator Joe Butcher, who is better known by his Twitter handle and pen name October Jones, has been using sticky notes and his seemingly boundless imagination to transform strangers on a train into hilarious cartoons.

## Boredom

The unwitting victims of his pranks have been given the features of beloved characters such as Batman, Spiderman, and, in one ingenious snapshot, Wile E. Coyote even appears to be chasing Road Runner.

The clever creations are doodled onto the small pieces of paper, and then held in just the right position for a funny photograph to be taken - the image is then uploaded to social network websites.

When asked on Twitter why he did took the time, Mr Butcher wrote: "I did them to combat boredom on my long commute."

He has seemingly shared his journeys with a gruff Winnie the Pooh, Danger Mouse's soft-spoken sidekick Penfold, Kermit The Frog, Daffy Duck and comic book favourite Hellboy.

People-cum-cartoons include an annoyed Mickey Mouse, with the caption: "Howdy, I'm on a train. This guy just caught me laughing at his squeaky voice."

ET the Extra Terrestrial also ap-



Who's taking the Mickey then?



One passenger turns in Batman



Where's Wally? Right here



Spiderman takes the train

pears to be slightly miffed. The Twitter caption reads: "On train. Found seat. I just told this guy off for using his phone in the Quiet Zone. I don't care who he's phoning."

The drawings have been getting world-wide attention, having been re-posted thousands of times on a number of social websites after initially

being tweeted to October Jones' 77,000 Twitter followers. Mr Butcher, under his pseudonym, is also the mastermind behind the -popular Texts From Dog, an internet craze that has led to two published books, called Texts From Dog and The Dog Delusion, the latter being published in October.

Picture credit: @OctoberJones

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**NEWS****Fashion show in aid of hospice**

A CLOTHES shop plans to boost the £1,350 it has already raised for a hospice by organising another fundraising fashion show.

Happy Families, of Hagley, will run the spring and summer fashion show on March 17, starting at 7.30pm, at Hagley Community Centre.

**Proud**

It is the third similar event that it has held in aid of Mary Stevens Hospice, based in Stourbridge.

Happy Families spokesman Gurdip Trehan said: "We are very proud of our association with Mary Stevens Hospice, and to help raise money for such a wonderful cause".

Tickets for the latest show cost £5 and are available by calling Happy Families on 01562 887188 or by calling Sue Williams on 07536 111637.

**Fred, 85, tells pupils about his escape from the Nazis**

Survivor Fred Austin

"I WAS sleeping in my bedroom and as it was coming up to midnight I heard the noise of tramping feet — they were German soldiers coming to take over my country."

Two days later Fredi Stiller was rushed out of the country of his birth by his widowed mother Ruzena.

The 10-year-old Jewish boy boarded

a train and then boat for a new life in England, escaping death at the hands of the Nazis. Fredi, now 85 and called Fred Austin, told schoolchildren that his mother and two older sisters Ilse and Trude died in a gas chamber at the Treblinka extermination camp on October 5, 1942.

Speaking at Pedmore Technology College, Mr Austin MBE, whose family had lived in Czechoslovakia, showed a photograph of his family to pupils.

He told them that in March 1939 his

mother had put him on a train, as he looked out of the window he saw her waving goodbye with her handkerchief. "That was the last time I was to see her," said Mr Austin, who went to school in England, then university where he met his wife Margaret. He went on to teach in Birmingham, becoming headteacher at Dudley Grammar School, retiring in 1985.

Mr Austin has written a book about his experiences, *Czech and Mate*, published by Brewin Books.

**Play causes bedroom fire**

A THREE-YEAR-OLD boy playing with a gas ring ignitor caused a pile of clothes to set alight sparking a fire in a back bedroom.

Fire crews from Stourbridge and Brierley Hill were called to the end terrace house in Smallshire Way, Stourbridge, at around 3.30pm on Monday.

All of the people in the property at the time, a man, woman and the child, has already made it safely outside by the time of officers arrived. The man had suffered slight smoke inhalation. The fire was contained within the bedroom and firefighters used breathing equipment to reach the blaze and extinguish it.

Watch Commander Brian Morris said: "The three-year-old was playing with the gas ring ignitor. It was one which produced a full flame rather than just a spark." Mr Morris added that the fire had damaged a window.

**Fitness boot camp promises new style**

Ready for the new fitness sessions at Cinder Bank

AN internet entrepreneur from Dudley and his friend are to get tough at an urban boot camp club with a difference.

Joshua Burchell, aged 24, and Lee Morgan, 31, will launch Total Body Fitness (TBF) on Saturday, March 1, on the car park of Champions Church in Netherton.

Their aim is to combine health and fitness awareness by inspiring people to "reduce blood pressures and body mass."

Joshua and Lee are both qualified trainers and first-aiders and have lost a combined weight of eight stone.

"There is a proven marketplace for outdoor training but what we have in mind is far from the perceived Sergeant Major-style delivery of barking orders," said Joshua.

Dudley, like most of the West Midlands, struggles with high levels of obesity and type 2 diabetes. We would like to think TBF could help towards addressing this problem."

The launch day begins at 10am on the floodlit site of Champions Church, Cinder Bank. Hour-long sessions will be held there on Tuesdays at 6pm, Thursdays at 7pm and Saturdays at 10am.

**Fairtrade fortnight marked by events**

FAIRTRADE is taking centre stage in Dudley during a fortnight of celebrations.

Dudley Council is backing Fairtrade Fortnight (February 24 to March 9) and supporting the activity of two borough groups. Sedgley Fairtrade Initiative and Stourbridge Fairtrade will be holding a range of activities.

The Sedgley group's main event is on February 28 from 11am to 2pm at the Sedgley Co-op on Dudley Street and will include cookery demonstrations, tastings and a Fairtrade craft stall. The Mayor of Dudley, Councillor Alan Finch, will be calling in at 1pm to learn about the group's work and the support that Sedgley Co-op has given.

Other activities include a free Fairtrade tea and coffee tasting session organised by Stourbridge Fairtrade on March 8 from 10am to noon at St Thomas' Church Hall on Market Street. The Mayor will also be dropping by Sainsbury's Amblecote tomorrow.

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## The search is on to find ladies for Fawlty Towers

A VERSION of much-loved British sitcom Fawlty Towers is coming to the Black Country.

Members of Mayhem Theatre are busy rehearsing their homage to the popular show. But they are on the lookout for the last piece of the jigsaw – two actresses to play the parts of old dears Miss Tibbs and Miss Gatsby.

There will be a cast of 23, which includes Dave Francis Williams as angry hotel manager Basil Fawlty and Matt Webb as hapless Spanish waiter Manuel.

But group founder Mark Moran said the two ladies were essential to the production. He added: "We are hoping it will appeal to someone who may have retired from an drama but fancies a taste of it again or maybe to somebody who just thinks it sounds like fun. They wouldn't need to be there for every rehearsal but we would really like to have them in the production."

The group holds rehearsals on Wednesdays at the French Hen in Cleint. The original BBC comedy featured John Cleese as Basil Fawlty, Prunella Scales as his wife Sybil and Andrew Sachs as Manuel. Mayhem Theatre will be performing the show from April 30 to May 3 at the Hardwicke Theatre at Thorns Community College, Quarry Bank. Contact Mr Moran on 01215507977 or 07973779496 or visit [www.mayhemtheatre.co.uk](http://www.mayhemtheatre.co.uk)



Dave Francis Williams as Basil Fawlty with Matt Webb as Manuel for the stage version of Fawlty Towers

## Transport services to be saved as staff are hit

**AN EXTRA £1 million in cuts will have to be found from the staffing and operations budget at transport authority Centro after officials decided not to cut services to the public.**

Councillors on the authority met last week to vote on the 2014/15 budget, with 15 councillors welcoming the proposals and seven voting against.

Initial plans to increase half-price children's bus fares to two-thirds were thrown out as councillors implemented a £7 million budget cut.

**By Lisa O'Brien**

staffing costs, which is suffering a loss of £3m.

Before the meeting at Centro House in Birmingham, dozens of West Midlands Pensioners Convention members gathered outside with placards calling for Ring and Ride services to be saved.

Councillor John McNicholas, who chaired the meeting, said it was only right for Centro to reduce the budget given the dramatic cuts in Government funding being faced by councils.

He made reassurances during the meeting that feedback had been taken on board, adding: "The proposals at the beginning were £2m cuts to the operations budget. We are considering £3m cuts from the operations budget to minimise the impact on services for people in the West Midlands."

The approved budget also involved a £1m reduction in bus station and infrastructure maintenance, changes to subsidised bus access standards and measures to reduce financing costs.

Walsall Councillor Richard Worrall, who voted in favour of the proposals and was heavily involved in the Ring and Ride campaign, said alternative sources of funding for the service would need to be considered for the future.

### Increased

The organisation had originally considered scrapping its funding for Ring and Ride, which provides a door-to-door service for pensioners and disabled people, but its annual grant will instead be cut to £8.5m – £2m less than this financial year.

The 60p fee for the service will be increased to £1 from April.

Councillors also voted to safeguard free bus travel after 11pm for older people, the blind and disabled.

Around 8,000 responses and three petitions were received during a consultation on the proposals, including one signed by 56,000 people making calls to maintain the level of funding to Ring and Ride services.

Now as a result of backtracking on the original proposals bosses will have to find another £1m of savings than originally planned from its operational and

## Strong winds led to alert at nightclub

SEVERE weather sparked a major operation in Brierley Hill last week after a large metal drainpipe on the side of a nightclub came loose in the rough winds.

Fears were high the cast-iron pipe, measuring 65ft, on the Pulse nightclub building could plummet into neighbouring buildings or crash on to the busy Dudley Road.

The road was closed off at its junctions with High Street and Venture Way after the dislodged pipe was reported by nearby workers at around 8.30am on February 13.

A hydraulic platform from Oldbury was despatched to help crews carry out the work. Because of the weight of the pipe, officers had to cut it into sections in order to safely remove it from the side of the nightclub building so it no longer posed a danger.

The strong winds and wet weather also uprooted trees in Gospel End Road, Sedgley, and Lawnswood Road, Stourbridge.

## Concern at impact of teachers' strike

A TEACHER'S strike planned for next month will hit companies across the Black Country while leaving parents struggling to find childcare say business bosses.

The NUT says its members will walk out of classrooms across the West Midlands on March 26, in a dispute over pay, pensions and conditions. If the industrial action goes ahead, it will be the third national strike since 2011 and will mean parents are forced to either take a day off work to look after their child or find alternative care.

Ninder Johal, vice president of the Black Country Chamber of Commerce, which represents businesses across the area, said he believed the strike action would see a big impact on small and medium companies operating in the area. He added: "I know the disruption action like this causes businesses. Parents will have less hassle in the sense that they have plenty of time to plan for it but this will cause lots of disruption for small and medium-sized enterprises."

Russ Bragger, general secretary of Walsall NUT, said members felt they had 'no choice' and had already put off industrial action in the hope of a breakthrough.

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## Water cannon idea rejected

THE Police and Crime Commissioner for the West Midlands has said he is unwilling to contribute towards the cost of a water cannon and has described the riot control measure as being 'as much use as a chocolate teapot'.

Bob Jones has spoken out about plans for forces to contribute towards the possible purchase of a water cannon being considered by the Metropolitan Police. He said: "Current proposals for the use of water cannon do envisage such resources being partly funded from the West Midlands Police budget set by myself and also have implications for the style of policing."

He said that the water cannon could become a liability rather than an asset, using scarce police resources. "I feel such equipment would be as much use as a chocolate teapot," he added.

# A Black Country twang — does it lower the tone?

**SUE Lawley** called a moment during her university days when she was waiting in the cold for the bus with her new room-mate from Surrey.

"I hopped up and down and said: 'Coom on, buzz'. Jenny turned to me and said 'what did you say?' After that it just hit me that I sounded different."

That night, back in 1964, the Dudley-born broadcaster made a conscious decision to get rid of her Black Country accent. But sadly, half a century on, it seems that speaking with a Black

Country burr is still considered to be a hindrance.

Colley Lane School in Cradley imposed a 'zero tolerance' policy on the use of Black Country dialect. Headmaster John White said: "We are seeing that some children coming in are not able to speak very much at all to be honest," he said. "We want to improve their standards in English. It is the foundation of everything."

The school has been at great pains to point out that it is incorrect grammar and pronunciation, rather than the Black Country accent, which the school is cracking down on.

But there is still a perception outside the Mid-

lands that anybody who speaks with a Black Country or Brummie accent is – not to put too fine a point on it – a bit thick.

A survey by pollsters Comres found that 33 per cent of those questioned considered a Birmingham accent to be 'unintelligent', with only Liverpudlian worse.

But TV presenter Adrian Chiles, who was born in Quinton and grew up in Hagley, believes prejudices about his tones have worked in his favour. He said: "I'm relaxed about the rest of the country pre-judging me as thick because there's no better starting point for any social or professional encounter."

## NHS £1m for agency workers

MORE than £1 million has been spent on agency staff to run the controversial NHS 111 phone service in the West Midlands.

Temporary staff have been taken on by West Midlands Ambulance Service.

The emergency service was forced to take on the workers under the terms of the contract to run the phone line that caters for non-emergency health calls, which it took over from NHS Direct in November.

NHS Direct pulled out of operating the service after saying the contract was too expensive.

But when the ambulance service took it on it was told it had to also inherit phone service staff from employment agency Conduit.

This amounted to around half of those employed to run the service – around 123 equivalent full time positions.

## What a night little monkey at safari park



Night monkey Barney settling in at the safari park

YOU may have heard of night owls, well meet Barney – a rare night monkey, who is settling in at the West Midlands Safari park.

The 12-week-old monkey was born at West Midlands Safari Park and is fast becoming a favourite among its staff.

He is a Douroucouli – more commonly known as a night monkey or owl monkey – from South America.

He was born on November 24 and despite his tiny stature, he is already becoming quite independent, eating solid food and learning to sit on the scales to be weighed.

His wide eyes are to help his night vision. The genus name 'Aotus' also means 'earless' and comes from the fact his ears are extremely small.

In the wild, his breed live high in the trees in family groups. They live up to 20 years in captivity. Adult pairs are monogamous. Barney's father is six-year old Ilay and the mother is Kyna who is four. Both parents arrived at the park last May from a zoo in Switzerland. Though called Barney, staff are still not sure whether the little monkey is actually a boy or a girl. Barney may be seen in the Twilight Cave during half term.

## More than 10,000 chasing 450 jobs

MORE than 10,000 people have expressed an interest in becoming a West Midlands police officer in just four days.

The force is putting 450 jobs up for grabs as it ends a five-year recruitment freeze.

And huge interest is being shown in the new constable roles, which will be rolled out over the next two years.

The formal application process doesn't begin until April and chiefs said there was no cap on how many people could register an interest.

However, a surge of people have already registered their interest in the positions for which salaries start from £21,999.

Potential applicants were asked to register on the force's website from last Monday and by Thursday night 10,500 had done so.

Traffic on the website soared as soon as it went live with up to 1,800 visitors viewing the page at its peak.

Chiefs said the new recruits would bring fresh ideas to the force.

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## Canada's Maple Leaf Trail

Eight days various departure dates



On the Maple Leaf Trail travel first to Ottawa, Canada's capital and enjoy some free time before continuing to Montreal, Canada's second city. Here an optional guided tour and Maple delights and dinner excursion are offered.

Quebec city is also visited which is one of Canada's oldest settlements with its stunning Chateau Frontenac ancient ramparts and UNESCO-listed centre.

This trip is taken from Newmarket's America and Canada brochure which includes many other destinations.

**Special discount offer applies for bookings made before February 28, 2014, see brochure for details.**

## Afternoon Tea at The Ritz

Two days departing Mar 30, Jun 15, Aug 10

**PRICE FROM £199**

- Return coach travel
- Overnight bed and breakfast accommodation
- Afternoon tea at The Ritz
- Tour manager escort to The Ritz
- Visit to Fortnum & Mason and Harrods
- Glass of Champagne at the Champagne bar, St Pancras
- Free time in London
- Services of a tour driver
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

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Join an optional guided city tour in Canada's largest city, Toronto, or explore the 11 kilometres of interconnected shopping and entertainment malls and historic buildings, not forgetting its most famous sight - the CN Tower.

### INFO

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- Six nights hotel accommodation on a room-only basis
- Time in Niagara Falls, Toronto and Montreal
- Full day excursion to Quebec City
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Two days departing May 17

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**New for 2014**

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**PRICE FROM £109**

## Bletchley Park The Secrets of War

Two days departing April 26 and August 9

**PRICE FROM £109**

- Return coach travel
- Overnight half-board accommodation
- Visit to Bletchley Park
- Visit to Oxford
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability

Special discount offer for bookings made before February 28, 2014, see brochure for details

Organised by Newmarket Promotions (ABTA V787X)

## Chelsea Flower Show and Windsor

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**PRICE FROM £199**

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- Overnight bed and breakfast accommodation
- Guided sightseeing tour of Krakow
- Visit to the castle district
- Visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Diamond Holidays (ABTA W0552)

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Three days departing April 25, June 20 and September 26

**PRICE FROM £199**

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- Two nights half-board accommodation
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- Services of a tour driver
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Diamond Holidays (ABTA W0552)

## Northern Lights

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**PRICE FROM £199.95**

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- Services of a tour manager

Please note the Northern Lights are a natural phenomena and sightings cannot be guaranteed

Organised by Omega Holidays (ABTA V4782, ATOL 6081)

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Four days various departure dates

**PRICE FROM £419**

- Return flights
- Three nights bed and breakfast accommodation
- Guided sightseeing tour of Krakow
- Visit to the castle district
- Visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Riviera Travel (ABTA V4744, ATOL 3430)

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Eight days various departure dates

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- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

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Organised by Newmarket Holidays (ABTA V7812, ATOL 2325)

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## Comedy whips up a frenzy of laughs

51 Shades of Maggie, Grand Theatre

THERE were a few brave men there to witness what must have been a cringing reality check for them on a woman's determined mission to get a man.

But for us women it was simply hilarious. Direct from sell-out runs Leesa Harker's one-woman hit comedy 51 Shades of Maggie was a hoot. It all started life as a joke when Leesa wrote a Belfast-based spoof of 50 Shades of Grey but it very soon went viral and had 29,000 followers. It tells the story of working class girl Maggie Muff and her search for Mr Right.

Let down by the men in her life she is relentless in her quest to find the man of her dreams. It came with a warning of strong language and themes of adult nature but it was, as Kenny Everett would have said, all in the best possible taste – well nearly!

The setting was simply a huge bed as Danielle Malone (Kelly in Hollyoaks), who played Maggie Muff, took us on a two-hour journey of love, booze and whips!

Maggie has always been let down by the men in her life.

Attending an interview at the social security office Maggie meets the handsome and hunky Mr Big who has a 'private room of pain'.

It may have been painful for her but it was sheer pleasure for the audience

SUE ATTWATER



Jack Shepherd, left, appears with Terrence Hardiman in ghostly Grand production

## Ghostly Signalman was the one on right track

### Classic Ghosts, Grand Theatre

With the wind howling outside, there was probably no better time in which to immerse oneself in a spine-tingling ghost story or two.

And that is what Middle Ground Theatre Company was offering in the form of Classic Ghosts, which lavishly brought to the stage two undisputed classics of the genre, The Signalman and Oh, Whistle, And I'll Come to You, My Lad, with varying success.

The Signalman, the Charles Dickens tale inspired by the author's own near-death experience in the Staplehurst Railway Crash of 1865, translated itself to the stage well.

A fantastic set – a signal box in a bleak railway cutting next to a cavernous tunnel – proved perfect for this spooky story which has special significance for local audiences who recall the celebrated 1976 TV adaptation, filmed on the Severn Valley Railway.

As trains thundered by, a haunted sig-

nalmans told a passing traveller of a ghostly being which appeared to him before two tragedies – a crash in the tunnel and the murder of a passenger – and has now begun appearing again, suggesting a third tragedy is about to happen. Excellently staged, with a neat twist at the end, this was spooky storytelling at its finest.

Oh, Whistle – the M R James chiller about a fussy scholar who stumbles upon an ancient artefact which releases a supernatural manifestation, both real and psychological, which plagues its finder, suffered in comparison. Despite the best efforts of the cast, the tension was not cranked up sufficiently before the haunting came to its terrifying end.

Jack Shepherd, best known as Wycliffe in the TV adaptions of the same name, and Terrence Hardiman (The Demon Headmaster) play the lead roles in both tales.

HELEN BROWN

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# What's On!

**Slam Dunk rock festival at Civic**  
ROCKERS The All American Rejects will headline a popular music festival in Wolverhampton this year.

The Slam Dunk Festival attracted 5,000 people to the Wolverhampton Civic last year and organisers are hoping for even more this time around. The seven-stage event combines outdoor and indoor stages across the city.

Canterbury, Letlive, Bury Tomorrow, The Ghost Inside and Crown The Empire are also among the bands to perform in the festival's ninth year. The touring festival also takes place in Leeds and in Hertfordshire over three days in May, with the bands due to converge on Wolverhampton on Bank Holiday Monday, May 26. Tickets start from £38.50. All three dates sold out last year.

**Fizzogs' panto time again... ay it**

**IRREPRESSIBLE** Black Country comics The Fizzogs are back on the road with their characters the Froggatts and Cottrells presenting A Black Country Fairytale... Ay It!

Some of the area's best comedy talent combine for the show at Wolverhampton's Newhampton Arts Centre, in Dunkley Street, tonight and tomorrow. Tickets cost £12 and the show starts at 7.30pm.

For more information on Sue, Jackie, Deb and co's comic adventures, including their old lady hip hop flashmob in Birmingham city centre, see their website: [www.fizzogproductions.co.uk](http://www.fizzogproductions.co.uk)

# The memories come flooding back for Grand star Denise

## Musical Reyes of the sun

AT this year's Grammy awards The Gipsy Kings – at Wolverhampton Civic Hall tomorrow – shared the Best World Music Album award with South Africa's Ladysmith Black Mambazo for their first album in six years, Savor Flamenco.

Based in the Camargue region of southern France, the Gipsy Kings are made up of musicians from two families—the Reyes from Arles and the Bardiards from Montpellier. In the 1960s Jose Reyes was singing with acclaimed flamenco guitarist Manitas de Plata. He then had his own band, Los Reyes, with his sons. When Jose died in 1979, Nicolas and Andre began playing with the Bardiards.

Los Reyes means 'The Kings' and the band became The Gipsy Kings, creating a musical style 'Rumba Flamenco' combining traditional flamenco with pop, Latin and jazz.



Grammy award winners The Gipsy Kings are coming to Wolverhampton

**WEST End star and TV presenter Denise Van Outen brings her new one-woman show to Wolverhampton Grand Theatre this week.**

Co-written by Terry Ronald with musical supervision by Kylie Minogue's musical collaborator, Steve Anderson, Some Girl I Used To Know is described as an uplifting look at modern womanhood set to songs of the 1980s and 90s.

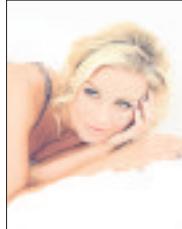
It follows high-flying Stephanie Canworth on a musical journey down memory lane. She has it all—a successful career, supportive husband and is a media darling but a face pack poking from an old flame bring memories flooding back.

### Strictly

Denise Van Outen's stage performances include Tell Me On A Sunday, Chicago, Rent, Remixed and Legally Blonde, and her television roles include Mary in Hotel Babylon, Michaela in The Empress' New Clothes, Leigh Jackson in Babes in the Wood and Kim Blakenev in Where the Heart Is. Last year she was runner-up in Strictly Come Dancing.

The play with music is staged for three nights at the Lichfield Street theatre from tonight to Saturday, plus a Saturday matinee. Tickets start at £14.50 and the box office can be contacted on 01902 429212.

There are more musical memories at the Grand on Sunday when David Al-



Stage star Denise Van Outen

acey, Des Coleman and Paul Drakely star as Frank, Sammy and Dean, bringing back the music of the kings of swing, the Rat Pack, by recreating a classic Las Vegas show featuring My Way, Mr Bojangles at That's Amore. Special guest is song and dance man Kenny Lynch.

Rod Stewart Musical Tonight's The Night, written by We Will Rock You's Ben Elton, is at Birmingham New Alexandra Theatre Monday to Saturday featuring Sugababe Jade Ewen.

## Jazz man with a famous name

HAVING one of the most famous actors on the planet for a father must be a challenge when you are trying to forge your own career but jazz composer and bass player Kyle Eastwood has managed to escape Clint's shadow.

Now in his 40s, and originally inspired by his father's jazz record collection, Kyle Eastwood has recorded six albums as band leader and long ago left California to live in Paris. He and his band won acclaim for their latest album The View From Here, winning favourable comparisons with Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers.

They will be in concert at Wolverhampton's Arena Theatre on Saturday, April 26. Tickets cost £18 (£16 concessions). Call the box office on 01902 321321.

## Zombies and Wytches alert

KEY gigs this week include singer-songwriters Newton Faulkner and Sam Brookes tonight at Birmingham 02 Academy. Black Country baggy rockers The Twang are at the Wulfrun on Saturday while Rizzle Kicks play the O2 Academy.

Beyoncé brings her award-winning show to the LG Arena on Sunday. Rudimental are on stage at Wolverhampton Civic Hall on Tuesday, the same day Spencer Davis returns with The Zombies, The Animals, The Yardbirds and Maggie Bell at Symphony Hall. Rising stars The Wytches play the Sunflower Lounge on Smallbrook Queensway on Thursday, February 27.

## Whats On

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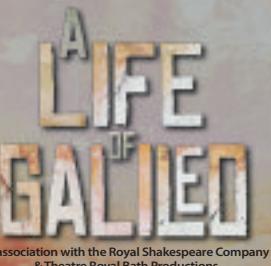
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# What's On!

Listings supplied by Press Association

## SATURDAY'S TV 22.02.14

### CHOICE



Tom Jones

#### The Voice UK

##### BBC1, 7pm

While Will's team, including Anna McLuckie, Femi Santiago, James Byron, Jermain Jackman and Sophie-May Williams are all hoping they have the right stuff to go all the way to the final, that is no guarantee of post-series success. Of course anything can happen during this latter stage of the blind auditions, and with new mentors – Kylie and Ricky Wilson – shaking things up in recent weeks, it looks like regulars Tom Jones and Will.i.am have their work cut out if they're going to keep their turns in the game and stand a chance of winning.

### BBC1

**6.00 Breakfast:** **10.00** Saturday Kitchen. **11.30** Food & Drink. (R) **12.00** BBC News: Regional News; Weather. **12.15** Football Focus. **1.00** Live Six Nations Rugby Union. **3.30** Live Six Nations Rugby Union. **5.35** BBC News: Weather. **6.15** *Pointless Celebrity*. A TV quiz show with Rustie Lee, Antony Worrall Thompson, Theo Randall, Rachel Allen, Jean-Christophe Novelli, Paul Hollywood, Gino D'Acampo and John Whate. (R)

**7.00 The Voice UK:** The final round of blind auditions – the last chance for the remaining hopefuls to win a place on Kylie Minogue, Will.i.am, Tom Jones or Ricky Wilson's teams.

**8.30 The National Lottery: Who Dares Wins:** Nick Knowles hosts the game show in which two pairs of strangers list what they know about given subjects, including the National Lottery draw, with Gaby Roslin. Last in the series.

**9.20 Casually:** Fletch's daughter runs away from home and lands herself in trouble. Now he has to discover why a teenage girl is lying and a woman is brought in after tripping over a paving stone. **10.10 BBC News:** Weather.

**10.30 Match of the Day:** Gary Lineker presents highlights of the day's football matches, including Chelsea v Everton at Stamford Bridge and Arsenal v Sunderland at the Emirates Stadium; National Lottery Update.

**11.55 The Football League Show:** Highlights of today's games. **1.15 Weatherview:** **1.20 BBC News.**

### BBC2

**7.15 Film:** *The Magic Box*. (1951) **8.00 Live Winter Olympics:** Coverage on the 15th and penultimate day of the Games. **11.30 Escape to the Country.** (R) **12.00 Floor & Trade Secrets.** (R) **12.30 Live Winter Olympics:** Further coverage of the penultimate day of the Games in Russia. **4.00 Live Winter Olympics:** The men's alpine skiing slalom. **4.50 First Sight:** **5.05** *Winter Olympics*. Further coverage of the men's alpine skiing slalom. **5.35 Final Score.**

**6.00 Live Winter Olympics:** The live coverage from Russia continues, including Centre Sanki in Krasnaya Polyana, with Clare Balding introducing the second run in the men's four-man bobsleigh competition. Subject to change.

**7.10 Winter Olympics: Today at the Games:** Highlights from the 15th day of the Games in Russia.

**8.00 Top Gear:** Jeremy Clarkson, Richard Hammond and James May demonstrate their love of small cars, with a trip to Ukraine. (R)

**9.00 The Lost Portrait of Bonnie Prince Charlie: A Culture Shock Special:** Alexander Grossi tries to track down a missing painting of Charles Edward Stuart by artist Allan Ramsay in the hope of unravelling one of the greatest mysteries in British art.

**10.00 QI XL:** With Katy Brand, Sue Perkins and David Mitchell.

**10.45 Film:** *There Will Be Blood*. (2007) Historical drama, starring Daniel Day-Lewis.

**1.15 This Is BBC Two.**

### ITV

**6.00 CITV:** *Dino Dan*. **6.25** Matt Hatter Chronicles. (R) **6.45** *Carnimals*. (R) **6.55** *Carnimals*. (R) **7.00 Carnimals**, (R) **7.10 Om Nom Stories**. (R) **7.15 Om Nom Stories**. (R) **7.20 Soothi**. (R) **7.30 Stories**. (R) **9.20 ITV News:** **9.30 Dinner Date:** (R) **10.30 Murder**. (R) **11.30 ITV News:** **11.40 The Crocodile Hunter Diaries.** (R) **1.40 The Jeremy Kyle Show USA:** **1.50 The Jeremy Kyle Show USA:** **1.55 Midsummer Murders.** (R) **5.35 Regional Programme:** Weather. **5.45 ITV News:** Weather.

**6.00 The Cube: Celebrity Special:** Boxer David Haye and T-Boz from TLC 2013 winner King Egan team up to complete a series of fiendishly difficult challenges and win thousands for charity. Phillip Schofield presents.

**7.00 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway:** New series. The Geordie duo return with the entertainment show. **8.00 Holmes and Ruth Langford:** **8.30 Get Out of My Ear**, and Michael Bublé performs.

**8.20 Take Me Out:** Mr Wales 2013, a semi-pro wrestler, a champagne importer and a cleaner try to impress the panel and win a date to the Isle of Fernando. Last in the series.

**9.50 The Jonathan Ross Show:** The host subjects another batch of celebrity guests to his trademark questioning. Plus, musical performances by A-list bands and solo artists.

**10.50 ITV News:** Weather.

**11.05 Film:** *The Fast and the Furious: Tokyo Drift.* (2006) **1.00 Jackpot247.** **3.00 In Plain Sight.** (R) **3.45 ITV News:** Handmade Treasures. (R)

### CHANNEL 4

**6.35 The Hoops:** (R) **7.00 Trans World Sport:** **8.00 The Morning Line:** **9.00 Everybody Loves Raymond.** (R) **9.30 Frasier:** (R) **10.00 Frasier:** (R) **10.35 The Big Bang Theory:** (R) **11.00 The Big Bang Theory:** (R) **12.30 How I Met Your Mother:** (R) **12.45 How I Met Your Mother:** (R) **1.30 The Simpsons:** (R) **1.30 Channel 4 Racing:** **4.10 Come Dine with Me:** (R) **4.40 Come Dine with Me:** (R) **5.10 Come Dine with Me:** (R) **5.40 Superstar Dogs: Countdown to Crufts:** A German shepherd, a border collie and a Labrador-Staffie cross compete.

**6.45 Channel 4 News:** **7.00 The Restoration Man:** George Clarke follows a couple's project to transform a derelict mill in Stone, Staffordshire, and uncovers the link between the building and the work of Josiah Wedgwood. (R)

**8.00 Walking Mystery: North Norfolk:** Tony Robinson learns about Victorian Norfolk during a coastal journey. Last in the series.

**9.00 Horrages:** Ellen sneaks away to meet a family friend who may be able to help her.

**9.55 Film:** *Transporter 3.* (2008) Underworld courier Frank Martin transports the kidnapped daughter of a corrupt US government minister across Europe. Action thriller sequel, with Jason Statham.

**11.55 Film:** *Cop Land.* (1997) **1.45 Boss:** **2.45 One Minute Past Midnight.** (R) **2.55 One Born Every Minute.** (R) **3.55 Kirstie's Handmade Treasures:** (R)

### CHANNEL 5

**6.00 Milkshake:** **10.00 Access:** **10.15 Film:** *Paul Blart: Mall Cop.* (2009) **12.00 Film:** *Sabrina.* (1995) Romantic comedy remake, with Harrison Ford and Julia Ormond. **2.25 Diagnosis Murder:** (R) **3.25 Film:** *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs.* (R) **4.20 Film:** *Columbo: The Most Crucial Game.* (1972) **6.40 5 News Weekend:** **6.45 NCIS:** A sailor's body is discovered in a disused restaurant, and his death is initially attributed to an accidental drug overdose – but Abby discovers evidence suggesting he was murdered. (R)

**7.30 The Restoration Man:** George Clarke follows a couple's project to transform a derelict mill in Stone, Staffordshire, and uncovers the link between the building and the work of Josiah Wedgwood. (R)

**8.30 The NCIS Movie: Legend:** The agents travel to LA to work with another NCIS team on an investigation that escalates into a high-priority case, and Tony begins to pry into the past. (R)

**10.10 Film:** *Nora Roberts' Midnight Bayou.* (2009) Premieres. An attorney investigates the dark history of his mansion to discover a secret room and a haunting. Supernatural romantic drama, with Jerry O'Connell and Lauren Stamile.

**12.00 SuperCasino:** **3.10 Benidorm:** **3.30 The Big Bang Theory:** (R) **4.25 Make It Bigger:** **4.50 The Fabulous Valley Show:** (R) **5.00 Angels of Jarm:** (R) **5.10 Hana's Helpline:** (R) **5.20 Angels of Jarm:** (R) **5.30 The Funky Valley Show:** (R) **5.40 Hana's Helpline:** (R)

### DIGITAL

**BBC Three:** **2.00 Great Movie Mistakes:** *Revenge of the Fifth Doctor* Who **8.00 Doctor Who:** The Ultimate Guide **9.00 Film:** *Little Fockers* (2010) **10.30 Guy Fawkes** **BBC Four:** **7.00 Wild China** **8.00 Lost Kingdoms of South America:** **9.00 Number 10:** **10.45 Ultima Thule:** Number 1 at the BBC **11.40 Forever Young – How Rock 'n' Roll Grew Up** **ITV2:** **3.40 Brit Awards 2014:** **5.55 Film:** *The Perfect Man* (2005) **8.00 Film:** *Ocean's Eleven* (2001) **10.20 Celebrity Juice:** Saturday Night Takeaway **Special:** **11.10 Film:** *Hannibal* (2011) **ITV3:** **3.50 Film:** *Clockwise* (1986) **5.45 Film:** *Agatha Christie's Poirot* **6.55 Film:** *Rosemary & Thyme* **8.00 Doc Martin** **9.00 Vera:** **11.00 A Touch of Frost** **ITV4:** **2.10 Film:** *The Appaloosa* (1966) **4.15 Storage Wars:** **5.20 Film:** *Superman II* (1980) **7.55 Film:** *Hornblower*. First of a two-part seafaring drama, starring Joan Grifffiths. **10.00 Film:** *Above the Law* (1988) **E4:** **3.30 The Big Bang Theory:** **4.30 Rude(ish) Tube:** **5.30 How I Met Your Mother:** **6.30 The Big Bang Theory:** **7.30 How I Met Your Mother:** **8.00 The Tomorrow People:** **8.30 Film:** *Airplane!* (1980) **10.50 Rude Tube:** **11.30 The Big Bang Theory** **Film4:** **3.10 Carry On Up the Khyber** (1968) **4.55 Coraline** (2009) **6.55 The Day the Earth Stood Still** (2008) **9.00 Babylon AD** (2008) **10.45 Carriers** (2009)

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## What's On!

**SUNDAY'S TV 23.02.14**

### CHOICE



Laura Main

### Call the Midwife

BBC1, 8pm

Babies, medical emergencies, period costumes – no wonder this series continues to clean up in the ratings, it's got all the ingredients you could possibly want from a Sunday night drama. And for anyone who thinks it might benefit from a little more romance, you're in for a treat this week as Trixie catches the eye of the local curate, Tom. While we normally wouldn't have thought Nonnatus House's resident blonde bombshell would be the type to have her head turned by a clergyman, she's thrilled when he asks her to join him for a day of cricket.

### BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. 7.30 Match of the Day. (R) 8.00 The Andrew Marr Show. 10.00 The Big Questions. 11.00 Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. 12.15 MOT2 Extra. 12.30 BBC News: Weather. 1.15 Bargain Hunt. (TV) 2.00 The Great Dorset Steam Fair. (R) 2.55 Flog It! Trade Secrets. (R) 3.30 Escape to the Country. (R) 4.15 Deadly 60 on a Mission: Pole to Pole. 4.45 Songs of Praise. 5.20 Pointless Celebrities. (R)

6.10 BBC News: Regional News; Weather. 7.15 Pacific Rivals.

6.30 Headings. Clarence and Connie's terrifying sister Charlotte arrives – and threatens to stay for good.

7.00 Countryfile. From the Isle of Portland off the Dorset coast, wildlife presenter Kate露易丝·劳德(Louise)为1976年世界赛车锦标赛(Racecar Championship)做准备。她和她的三个孩子以及丈夫理查德(Richard)一起体验了著名的Portland Stone quarries。包括天气预报(Weather for the Week Ahead)。

8.00 Call the Midwife. 电视剧是根据真实事件改编的，剧集中描绘了当地助产士邀请她上床睡觉。Sheila has finally decided what she wants in life and Patsy works tirelessly to diagnose a doctor's unusual symptoms. The mysterious Dr. Mirthos is sentenced to death for murder, then swiftly abducted by a gang from the slums, leaving the other Musketeers to infiltrate this dangerous district to find their friend.

10.00 BBC News: Weather. 10.25 Match of the Day. Including highlights of Liverpool v Swansea City.

11.35 Film: The Devil's Double.

(2011) Premiere. Fact-based drama, starring Dominic Cooper.

1.15 Weatherview. 1.20 BBC News.

### BBC2

6.00 Film: Bachelor Knight. (1947) 7.30 Monty Don's Italian Gardens. (R) 8.30 Countryfile. (R) 9.30 Live Winter Olympics. Coverage of the final day of the Games in Russia. 2.30 Live Winter Olympics. A look back at the highlights of the Winter Olympics. 4.00 Live Winter Olympics Closing Ceremony. The 22nd Winter Olympics are officially brought to a close.

7.00 Hunt vs Laude: F1's

Documentary using archive footage and interviews with key players to chart the battle between Britain's James Hunt and South Africa's Nelson

Laude for the 1976 world drivers' championship. (R)

8.00 Top Gear. Jeremy Clarkson drives the hand-crafted Touring Supergeiger Disco Volante and Richard Hammond experiences the Mercedes-Benz G63 AMG 6x6.

9.00 Dragons' Den. Aspiring entrepreneurs pitch ideas including a gloomy, three-dark shaped energy-saving device and a confidence-building children's toy.

10.00 Alan Davies Apres-Ski. The comedian and his guests continue to take on the latest from Sochi. Last in the series. (R)

10.30 Film: Of Time and the City.

(2003) Documentary in which film maker Tracey Davies examines how his home city of Liverpool has changed.

12.45 Film: Silkwood. (1983) 2.50 Sign Zone: Countryfile. (R) 3.45 Holby City. (R)

### ITV

6.00 CITY: Dino Dan. 6.10 Dino Dan. (R) 6.25 Matt Hatter Chronicles. (R) 6.45 Canimals. (R) 6.55 Canimals, (R) 7.00 Canimals, (R) 7.10 Om Nom Stories. (R) 7.20 Sooty Theory. (R) 7.30 The Big Bang Theory. (R) 7.40 The Secret Life of Us. (R) 7.50 Murder, She Wrote. (R) 7.20 Dickinson's Real Deal. (R) 7.11 20 ITV News: Weather. 11.30 Countrywise. 11.45 Inside the National Trust. 12.45 Film: Evil Under the Sun. (1982) 3.00 Film: One Man and His Secret Service. (1969) 5.50 Regional Programme: Weather.

6.00 ITV News: Weather.

6.15 Dancing on Ice. With only five stars left in the competition, the pressure increases to move as they move all the state twice, including a routine without the support of their professional partners. The results are at 8.30pm.

7.45 All Star Family Fortunes.

8.30 Dancing on Ice: The Skate Off. Dan takes the last place in the semi-final.

9.00 Mr Selfridge. Harry organises a patriotic concert to raise money for the troops, and having offered to help the government to recruit, orders to leave London on a secret mission to Berlin.

10.00 ITV News at Ten: Weather.

10.15 It'll Be Alright on the Night. TV bloopers. (R)

11.15 Premiership Rugby.

11.20 The Store. 2.15 The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) 3.45 ITV Nightscreen.

### CHANNEL 4

6.10 The Hoobs. (R) 6.25 The Hoobs. (R) 6.55 Freeports on 4. 7.30 Arenacross. 8.00 Frasier. (R) 8.25 The Taste. (R) 9.30 Sunday Brunch. 12.30 The Big Bang Theory. (R) 1.00 The Big Bang Theory. (R) 1.30 Jamie and Jimmy's Friday Night Feast. (R) 1.30 Deal or No Deal. 5.00 Film: The Devil Wears Prada. (2006) Comedy drama, starring Meryl Streep.

7.40 Channel 4 News.

8.00 The Edwardian Grand

Designer: A Time Team

Special. Tony Robinson goes to the grand scenes of the National Trust.

7.10 Film: The Jam. 7.25 Make Way for Noddy. (R) 7.30 Bert and Ernie's Great Adventures. (R) 7.40 City of Friends. (R) 7.55 Little Princess. (R) 8.05 Olly the Little White Van. (R) 8.10 The White Bear. (R) 8.15 The Bill and His Best Friend Corky. (R) 8.25 Angelina Ballerina. (R) 8.40 Rupert Bear. (R) 8.55 Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) 9.15 Jelly Jamm. (R) 9.30 Film: Power Rangers Super Sentai. (R) 10.35 Power Rangers Megaforce. (R) 11.00 Access. (R) 11.10 The Dog Rescuers. (R) 12.45 Ice Road Inspectors. (R) 13.00 The Wild. New Lives in the Wild. (R) 2.45 Film: The Kid. (2000) 4.45 Film: Over Her Dead Body. (2008)

6.35 5 News.

6.40 Film: Bridesmaids. (2011)

Premiere. A disorganized woman takes charge of her best friend's bridal party, but finds she has a rival in the wife of the groom's boss.

6.45 Film: Sex and the City.

(2008) Journalist Carrie prepares for her wedding, but fiancé Big is starting to get cold feet.

7.00 Mr Selfridge. Harry

organizes a patriotic concert to raise money for the

troops, and having offered to help the government to recruit, orders to leave London on a secret mission to Berlin.

7.45 Film: The Skate Off. Dan

takes the last place in the semi-final.

8.00 Film: The Hoobs. (R)

8.15 Film: Sex and the City.

(2008) Journalist Carrie

prepares for her wedding, but fiancé Big is starting to

get cold feet.

8.30 Dancing on Ice: The Skate

Off. Dan takes the last place in the semi-final.

9.00 Film: Daybreakers. (2010)

Thriller, starring Ethan Hawke.

10.55 Film: The Matrix Revolutions. (2003) Sci-fi

sequel, starring Keanu Reeves.

1.15 SuperCasino. 3.05 Ultimate

Emergency Bikers. (R) 4.00

Wildlife SOS. (R) 4.25 Make It Big.

4.50 The Funky Valley Show.

5.00 Angels of Jarm. (R) 5.10

Hana's Helpline. (R)

### CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! Peppa Pig. 6.05 Roary the Racing Car. (R) 6.25 Fifi and the Flowertots. (R) 6.55 Giggles. (R) 6.35 The Mr Men Show. (R) 6.50 Chloe's Closet. (R) 7.00 Roobarb and Custard Too. (R) 7.10 Film: The Jam. 7.25 Make Way for Noddy. (R) 7.30 Bert and Ernie's Great Adventures. (R) 7.40 City of Friends. (R) 7.55 Little Princess. (R) 8.05 Olly the Little White Van. (R) 8.10 The White Bear. (R) 8.15 The Bill and His Best Friend Corky. (R) 8.25 Angelina Ballerina. (R) 8.40 Rupert Bear. (R) 8.55 Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) 9.15 Jelly Jamm. (R) 9.30 Film: Power Rangers Super Sentai. (R) 10.35 Power Rangers Megaforce. (R) 11.00 Access. (R) 11.10 The Dog Rescuers. (R) 12.45 Ice Road Inspectors. (R) 13.00 The Wild. New Lives in the Wild. (R) 2.45 Film: The Kid. (2000) 4.45 Film: Over Her Dead Body. (2008)

6.35 5 News.

6.40 Film: The Man in the Iron

Mask. (1998) The King of France

tries to dispose

of his twin brother

on the throne.

Swashbuckling adventure,

with Leonardo DiCaprio and John Travolta, which is bad for

violence and sexual content.

9.00 Film: Daybreakers. (2010)

Thriller, starring Ethan Hawke.

10.55 Film: The Matrix Revolutions. (2003) Sci-fi

sequel, starring Keanu Reeves.

1.15 SuperCasino. 3.05 Ultimate

Emergency Bikers. (R) 4.00

Wildlife SOS. (R) 4.25 Make It Big.

4.50 The Funky Valley Show.

5.00 Angels of Jarm. (R) 5.10

Hana's Helpline. (R)

Listings supplied by Press Association

### DIGITAL

**BBC Three**  
7.00 Pop's Greatest Dance Crazes  
7.25 The Voice UK 9.00 Sun, Sex and Suspicious Parents: Thailand  
10.00 Family Guy 10.45 Uncle BBC Four  
7.00 Francesco's Italy Top to Toe  
8.00 The Review Show 9.00 Birthdays, Weddings and Bloody-mindedness: Concrete Poetry with Jonathan Meades  
10.00 Film: In a Better World (2010) 11.50 BB King – The Life of Riley  
**ITV2**  
3.50 Ant & Dec's Saturday Nightameleon 5.15 Film: Junior (1994)  
7.30 Film: Ocean's Thirteen (2004)  
10.00 The Only Way Is Essex 11.00 Utterly Outrageous Reality TV Moments 2013  
**ITV3**  
2.55 Agatha Christie's Marple 4.55 Lewis 7.00 Agatha Christie's Poirot  
9.00 Ronnie Corbett's Comedy Britain 10.00 Inspector Morse  
**ITV4**  
2.50 Film: Northwest Mounted Police (1940) 5.20 Film: Nevada Smith (1966) 9.00 Film: The Keeper (2009) 11.00 Hell on Wheels 11.55 Nitro Circus  
**Film4**  
3.00 Marvel's Agents of SHIELD  
4.00 The Tomorrow People 5.00 Troy 6.00 Brooklyn Nine-Nine 6.30 The Big Bang Theory 8.00 Film: Ice Age: Dawn of the Dinosaurs (2009)  
10.00 The Big Bang Theory 10.30 My Mad Fat Diary 11.30 Hell on Engagement  
**Film4**  
2.35 At the Earth's Core (1976)  
4.20 Freaky Friday (1976) 6.15 Independence Day (1996) 9.00 Unknown (2011) 11.15 The Talented Mr Ripley (1999)

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## What's On!

### Film Choices

#### Monday

**Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery, Channel 5, 11pm**

A velvet-clad, sex-crazed secret agent from the 1960s agrees to be put into a state of suspended animation after his arch-enemy escapes justice. Thirty years later he is defrosted to do battle with the power-mad villain again. Spoozy spy adventure, with Mike Myers, Elizabeth Hurley, Mimi Rogers and Robert Wagner. (1997)

#### Wednesday

**Beginners, Channel 4, 12.05am**

A man starting a relationship looks back on the last years of his father's life, when he came out as gay at the age of 75. He recalls the old man's passionate new outlook on life, and ponders what the experience can teach him about his current romance. Comedy drama, starring Ewan McGregor and an Oscar-winning Christopher Plummer. (2010)

**The Well, Channel 4, 1.50am**

The son of a rich white man is suspected of being behind the disappearance of a five-year-old black girl, causing a near riot among the black community. When she is later found trapped in a well, the townspeople set aside their racial differences and unite to rescue her. Drama, starring Richard Rober, Henry Morgan, Barry Kelley and Christine Larson. (1951)



One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, Friday, BBC2, 11.05pm

#### Thursday

**Hunger Point, Channel 5, 3.15pm**

Two sisters struggle to come to terms with the legacy of their mother's obsession with dieting and physical perfection. As they try to beat the strict conditioning she instilled in them, they begin to rebuild their shattered family life. Drama, starring Barbara Hershey, Christina Hendricks, Susan May Pratt and John Getz. (2003)

#### Friday

**Black Friday, Channel 5, 3.20pm**

An expert in bank security systems is forced to commit a crime when her daughter is taken hostage. The girl's captors order her to break into a dead cop's safety-deposit box and retrieve a vital piece of incriminating evidence. Thriller, starring Amy Carlson, Judd Nelson, Thomas Ian Griffith and Darcy Rose Byrnes. (2007)

**One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, BBC2, 11.05pm**

A rebellious convict gets himself sent to a psychiatric hospital, thinking it will be easier than prison. Finding himself surrounded by institutionalised patients, he encourages them to rebel against the tyrannical head nurse. Milos Forman's Oscar-winning drama based on Ken Kesey's novel, starring Jack Nicholson, Louise Fletcher, Brad Dourif, Christopher Lloyd, William Redfield, Will Sampson and Danny DeVito. (1975)

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### Pick of the Week

## Courtroom drama is back on the defence

**B**ritish TV viewers seem to love nothing more than a good crime drama. Programmes such as Broadchurch, Law & Order, George Gently and DCI Banks regularly do well in the ratings, but they tend to concentrate on what happens when the culprits are caught – we rarely see what happens to them after that.

**L**aw & Order: UK manages to straddle both the investigation and the prosecution, but without the depth legal drama fans probably crave. Kavanagh QC did delve into that side of things, but few series since then have managed it – until **Silk**, BBC1, 9pm made its debut in 2011.

We're thrilled to see it back for a third series, and with two new stars, Maxine Peake and Rupert Penny-Jones, still on board. Both are in-demand (Peake has also turned to writing recently – her first play, *Beryl: A Love Story on Two Wheels*, will open at the West Yorkshire Playhouse in Leeds in June), so it wouldn't have been a major shock if they were too busy to participate in Peter Moffat's acclaimed drama.

Her character, Martha, is thrown into the thick of things as soon as the new

series begins when she's asked to defend the son of the head of chambers who has been arrested for killing a woman, and as the evidence stacks up against him, her job seems to get increasingly difficult.

Meanwhile, Billy struggles with a secret and a new practice manager sends ripples through the court room.

Maxine has played both the criminals and lawyers during her career, and is very clear about which is the more challenging role.

"It's much more interesting being in front of the court," she admits. "And I think performance-wise, it's harder pretending to defend someone than being the defendant."

Female QC's are few and far between – there have only ever been about 300, according to Bar Council statistics – but Maxine had help when it came to research from a formidable role model.

"I met with Helena Kennedy QC at the Royal Courts of Justice, around the same time I knew I was going up for the part," reveals Maxine. "I remember thinking this woman is quite special and I'd like to

find out more about this world."

"It's scary and it's true that women don't get a fair crack at the whip, partly because as a women you have to make sacrifices, such as deciding whether to have a family, and being a QC takes over your life."

However, Martha is no dowdy, lifeless, career-driven soul.

"I wanted to make her a little bit glamorous, I feel she's got her own personality, she's a bit rock 'n' roll. She's definitely into her music. It's funny because my friends were like 'hang on, that's you, because I love my music and red lipstick,' which worked for the character too."

But has playing Martha given Maxine a taste for the legal profession?

"I find it fascinating but I don't think I'm quite cut out for it!" she laughs. "I think I'd get far too involved and that's what you see with Martha. I'd find it really difficult to switch off and I think you sort of have to, because people's lives are in your hands."

Nell Stuke, Miranda Raison and Frances Barber also star.



Rupert Penny-Jones and Maxine Peake star in Silk, Monday, BBC1, 9pm

### Best of the Rest

#### Monday

**The Gadget Show**

**Channel 5, 7pm**

This year marks Jason Bradbury's 10th as host of The Gadget Show, a series that kicked off in June 2004 with Adrian Simpson, Jon Bentley, Bradbury and Suzi Perry examining camcorders, TVs, cars with heads-up displays and mobile phones. The first of the new run sees the return of Ortilis Deely. He, Hachell Riley and Jason explain why the desktop PC has fallen out of favour. Ortilis will also nip to Italy to test iCub, a robot that learns skills from social interaction. As instantly retro photos are still hugely popular, Jon and the Beatles' former photographer Paul Beriff will be following a Fab Four tribute band around Liverpool. Plus, online video stars Matt and Darren test portable gaming devices.

#### DCI Banks

**ITV, 9pm**

If Stephen Tompkinson played DCI Banks like his first major character, Drop the Dead Donkey's dodgy cameraman Damian Day, you could expect planted evidence and false testimonies left, right and centre. Fortunately, Banks is far more dedicated to the truth – and in the conclusion of this two-parter, he's having to go all-out to find it. He learns of a mysterious tape recording that appears to link Matt Barber's father Jack, who was the original investigating officer in the John Gaunt case, with the Crystal Kiss – and faces a race against time to retrieve it. Helen, meanwhile, thinks she has all she needs to push the former copper harder.

#### Tuesday

**Death in Paradise**

**BBC1, 9pm**

Tycoon Alexander Jackson, owner of Sebastian Island, has been shot dead at a family gathering. As there is only one property on the island, and access is limited to one jetty via boat, the suspects are Alexander's three kids, housekeeper Rosie, and PA Emily. They were all at the house at the time of the crime. However, with only one of the late man's sons able to provide an alibi, Humphrey Goodman (Kris Marshall) and his team hope they can crack the case before the killer strikes again. With a hurricane approaching, the crime-busters could be stranded until the storm passes.

#### Wednesday

**Line of Duty**

**BBC2, 9pm**

The art of any great drama in these days of multi-channel viewing is grabbing the audience by the scruff of the neck and not letting go until the closing titles. Which is one of the reasons this fast moving, hard-hitting cops-and-robbers saga has touched a chord with the masses. In the latest offering Lindsay is remanded in custody on a murder charge, and her first thought on hearing the verdict is wondering who will take care of Bella, her cat. When she becomes the victim of a violent attack, Lindsay confides in Kate that she had a previous relationship with an executive police officer – who may have wanted her framed.



Suspects, Wednesday, Channel 5, 10pm

#### Suspects

**Channel 5, 10pm**

A woman has been attacked by the West Willow canal by a man wearing gloves and a balaclava. There is no CCTV footage, which naturally makes life difficult for crime busters DS Jack Weston (Damien Molony) and Charlie Steele (Clare-Hope Ashitey). The fact there have been two other rapes within a mile-and-a-half radius makes them suspect recently released serial rapist George Callahan.

When pulled in for questioning, he claims to have been watching football at home, and both his home CCTV (installed since his release) and his girlfriend Annette (Annabelle Apsion) corroborates his alibi. Jack smells a rat, while DC Steele is stunned that the latest rape victim is the station's chief superintendent's wife.

#### Thursday

**Inspector George Gently**

**BBC1, 8.30pm**

As well as letting us admire the 1960s fashions, Inspector George Gently also examines the social issues of the time, and this episode, the last in the current series, turns its attention to the decline of the coal industry. The once-thriving colliery town of Burnside is facing an uncertain future

amid reports that the National Coal Board is planning to close the mine – and the atmosphere is about to get even more tense after the body of miner Arthur Hawkes is discovered in the pit. Gently and Bacchus are called in to investigate, and discover that union man Hawkes had been in conflict with his 'comrades', as well as the management.

#### Friday

**Jonathan Creek**

**BBC1, 9pm**

Alan Davies recently tried out an unlikely new job – winter-sports reporter. He's been bringing us his own unique take on the action from Sochi in BBC Two's Apres-Ski. But now he's getting back to a more familiar role, that of master illusionist Jonathan Creek. The first episode seems tailor-made for him, as it involves a West End leading lady Juno Pirelli (Ali Bastian) who is found stashed in a locked dressing room. But now he's happily married and working alongside his wife Polly (Sally Alexander), can Jonathan be persuaded to return to sleuthing?

#### Edge of Heaven

**ITV, 9pm**

He may have a Wham!-obsessed mother and live in Margate's only 1980s-themed bed and breakfast, but it seems unlikely Alfie will be in the mood to jive around the kitchen to Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go. If you missed last week's opening instalment of this promising comedy drama, it saw him being ditched at the altar by his bride Carly, who then went off on their honeymoon on her own – which she clearly enjoyed because she's now back with a new boyfriend.

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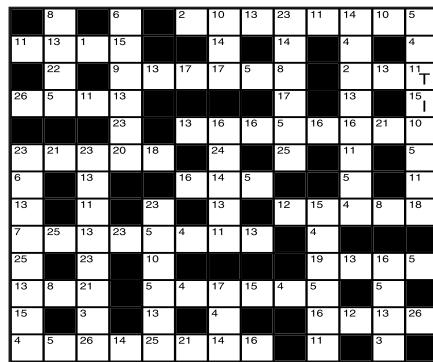
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**Puzzler****Brain Gym**

No.261

**Codeword**

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

F	P	W	X	V	H	I	K	U	C	S	Q	D
O	J	Y	A	L	B	Z	T	E	R	M	G	

**Double Crossword**

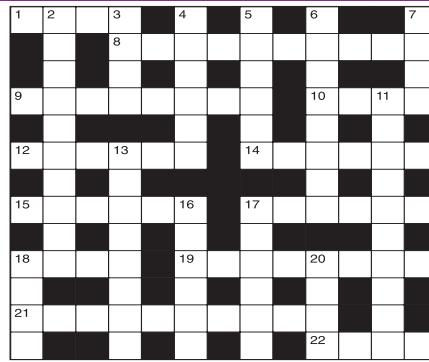
Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

**Cryptic Clues:****Across**

- 1. Word associated with poker, but it's not flush! (4)
- 8. One is certain to be this (10)
- 9. Was present and listened (8)
- 10. Stops and objects (4)
- 12. It's not very often one gets a letter ahead of time! (6)
- 14. Picnic, perhaps (3,3)
- 15. His work's a grind (6)
- 17. Walk the street with a list (6)
- 18. Deserted port (4)
- 19. Give an undertaking to shrink? (8)
- 21. He's versatile, but liable to go to pieces (3,2,5)
- 22. Take the last drop (4)

**Down**

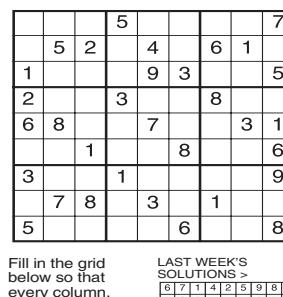
- 2. Order to the non-conformist on the track? (3,3,4)
- 3. Vague letter of little value (4)
- 4. Holiday when one is not at one's best (3,3)
- 5. Promise to put a shelf on quietly (6)
- 6. Film executive on board (8)
- 7. Service accommodation (4)
- 11. Unpopular second feature that's apt to grow on one (6,4)
- 13. One of the family may be oriental (8)
- 16. It has all the right ingredients (6)
- 17. Various indications it's not raining (6)
- 18. City where mail goes astray (4)
- 20. Charge for a plant (4)
- 22. Above (4)

**Quick Clues:****Across**

- 1. Girl (4)
- 2. Dictatorial (10)
- 3. Cease (4)
- 4. Strip (6)
- 5. Hinder (6)
- 6. Punish (8)
- 7. Pace (4)
- 11. Great merit (10)
- 13. Blend (8)
- 16. Perpetrate (6)
- 17. Ligament (6)
- 18. Sieve (4)
- 20. Too (4)

**Down**

- 9. Finished (8)
- 10. Percolate (4)
- 12. Painter (6)
- 14. Show clearly (6)
- 15. Resting (6)
- 17. Threafold (6)
- 18. Wound-mark (4)
- 19. Cannibal (8)
- 21. Happy (10)
- 22. Above (4)

**Sudoku**

Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >  
CRYPTIC - Across: 7 Altar; 8 Rioters; 9 Tickets; 10 Fault; 12 First of all; 15 Incapacity; 18 Deter; 19 Neutron; 21 Galleon; 22 Angel; Down: 1 Master-mind; 2 Stick; 3 Free; 4 Wrists; 5 Confront; 6 Refusal; 11 Tolerantly; 13 Importer; 14 Scuttle; 16 Canine; 17 Drags; 20 Utter; 21 Tapet; 12 Steamer; 15 Pervy; 16 Savary; 17 Nappy Shakes; 21 Reviles; 22 Faise; Down: 1 Decoration; 2 Erase; 3 Char; 4 Astem; 5 Abattoir; 6 Despol; 11 Ring-master; 13 Tenderly; 14 Achieve; 16 Insist; 17 Skill; 20 Rife.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:  
CRYPTIC - Across: 7 Altar; 8 Rioters; 9 Tickets; 10 Fault; 12 First of all; 15 Incapacity; 18 Deter; 19 Neutron; 21 Galleon; 22 Angel; Down: 1 Master-mind; 2 Stick; 3 Free; 4 Wrists; 5 Confront; 6 Refusal; 11 Tolerantly; 13 Importer; 14 Scuttle; 16 Canine; 17 Drags; 20 Utter; 21 Tapet; 12 Steamer; 15 Pervy; 16 Savary; 17 Nappy Shakes; 21 Reviles; 22 Faise; Down: 1 Decoration; 2 Erase; 3 Char; 4 Astem; 5 Abattoir; 6 Despol; 11 Ring-master; 13 Tenderly; 14 Achieve; 16 Insist; 17 Skill; 20 Rife.

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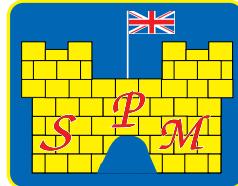
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# Drivetime

# New showroom opens doors

By David Banner

New 'Blue Oval' signage is in place and Startin of Stourbridge's impressive new Ford showroom is open for business having opened its doors on Thursday, January 2.

This dealership celebrates its official opening mid February but the Ford sales, aftersales, service and Ford parts departments are all fully operational now. The sales department is managed by Simon Dennison, who has extensive knowledge of the Ford brand and its many products.

Sales executive, Alison Byers, also knows Ford well. She's the Ford accredited Motability specialist able to provide for the motoring needs of all Motability car customers.



Established over 170 years ago, family-owned Startin of Stourbridge bought Showells in June 2013 with the intention of adding the Ford brand to its portfolio. The new Ford dealership runs alongside the successful and established Hyundai franchise. So with two of the UK's most popular motoring brands at one location, one can imagine that customer interest is great and that footfall within the showrooms is high.

Work is now under way to construct a brand new Ford Retail Look and Style showroom, the design of which follows standards set by Ford. The facilities for both customers and staff to use are extremely impressive and very hi-tech. WiFi and iPads are readily available so that customers can check out the many options offered by Ford when configuring the specification of their new Ford vehicles whilst



Ford has long been recognised as Britain's biggest-selling motor brand with a huge and enthusiastic following

customers relax on supremely comfortable seating.

Combining these facilities with the friendly and attentive customer care offered by the sales team will make a visit to Startin of Stourbridge's new Ford showroom a very pleasant experience indeed. It'll be a great environment in which to discuss your next car purchase.

Ford has long been recognised as Britain's biggest-selling motor brand with a huge and enthusiastic following. Inside this showroom you'll find Ford's award-winning range of stylish models. The range includes

many of Britain's most popular cars such as KA, New Fiesta, New B-Max, Focus, C-Max, Mondeo, S-Max, Galaxy and the all New Kuga crossover. These stylish cars not only top the sales charts but lead the way in all their respective classes.

In addition to new Ford sales, Startin Ford and other pre-owned cars. So, for friendly advice visit Startin of Stourbridge Ford, 82 Stourbridge Road, Stourbridge DY9 7DE. Call 01384 849176.

Pictured above are Dealer principal Mark Whale, Ford sales executive Alison Byers and Ford sales manager Simon Dennison.

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Official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) Highest: FORD Focus 1.6 Duratec Ti-VCT (85PS) 5 Door, M5: urban 34.0 (8.3), extra urban 61.4 (46), combined 47.9 (5.9). Official CO<sub>2</sub> emission 136g/km. Lowest: FORD Fiesta 1.0 Duratec (80PS) Stop-Start, M5: urban 55.4 (5.1), extra urban 74.3 (3.8), combined 65.7 (4.3). Official CO<sub>2</sub> emission 99g/km. \*Finance subject to status. Guarantees and indemnities may be required. Freeplus Ford Credit. Facility fee (where applicable) is payable with first payment. Deposit allowance only available when financed with Ford Credit. Purchase fee (where applicable) is payable with GMFV if you wish to own the vehicle at the end of the agreement. This agreesales all previously advertised manufacturer's promotions. Vehicles shown for illustration purposes only.



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Fuel consumption figures for CR-V 2.0 i-VTEC S 2WD Manual in mpg (l/100km): Urban 31.7 (8.9), Extra Urban 45.6 (6.2), Combined 39.2 (7.2). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions: 168g/km; for Civic 1.4 i-VTEC S Manual in mpg (l/100km): Urban 42.2 (6.7), Extra Urban 60.1 (4.7), Combined 52.3 (5.4). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions: 129g/km; for Jazz 1.2 i-VTECS in mpg (l/100km): Urban 42.8 (6.6), Extra Urban 61.4 (4.6), Combined 53.3 (5.3). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions: 123g/km. Fuel consumption figures sourced from official EU-regulated laboratory test results, are provided for comparison purposes and may not reflect real-life driving experience.

**Models Shown:** CR-V 2.0 i-VTEC S 2WD Manual in optional Passion Red Pearl at £22,495 On The Road; Civic 1.4 i-VTEC S Manual in Milano Red Non-Metallic at £16,995 On The Road; Jazz 1.2 S Manual in Milano Red Non-Metallic at £10,995 On The Road (OTR). **Terms and Conditions:** New retail CR-V 2.0 i-VTEC S 2WD Manual registered from 2 January 2014 to 31 March 2014. Subject to model and colour availability. Offers applicable at participating dealers and are at the promoter's absolute discretion. **Honda Aspirations (P&P):** £269 per month example shown based on CR-V 2.0 i-VTEC S 2WD Manual in optional Passion Red Pearl at £22,495 total cash price including 5 year care package at £500 (and total amount payable) with 37 months 0% APR Representative (interest rate per annum 0% fixed) with £4,456.64 (19%) deposit, Guaranteed Future Value / Optional Final Payment of £8,854.53, annual mileage of 10,000 and excess mileage charge: 6p per mile. New retail Civic 1.4 i-VTEC S registered from 2 January 2014 to 31 March 2014. Subject to model and colour availability. Offers applicable at participating dealers and are at the promoter's absolute discretion. **Honda Aspiration (P&P):** £209 per month example shown based on Civic 1.4 i-VTEC S Manual in Milano Red Non-Metallic at £17,495 total cash price including 5 years Plan at £500 (and total amount payable) with 37 months 0% APR Representative (interest rate per annum 0% fixed) with £3,812.69 (22%) deposit, Guaranteed Future Value / Optional Final Payment of £6,158.36, annual mileage of 10,000 and excess mileage charge: 5p per mile; New retail Jazz 1.2 S registered from 2 January 2014 to 31 March 2014. Subject to model and colour availability. Offers applicable at participating dealers and are at the promoter's absolute discretion. The advance payment of £1,200 (including 5% deposit) is due at the time of booking. Total monthly payments of £5,209.60. Total amount payable of £18,709.20 (16%) deposit. **Finance Offer:** Finance available on approved credit. Total monthly payments of £15,972.22 (annual mileage of 10,000 miles, 6p per mile, 37 months). You will need to pay the first 5 monthly payments in full at the time of booking and you will pay all other amounts in 36 monthly instalments. The vehicle is in good condition and has been serviced in accordance with the Honda service book and the maximum annual mileage has not been exceeded. Indemnities may be required in certain circumstances. Finance is only available to persons aged 18 or over, subject to status. All figures are correct at time of publication but may be subject to change. Credit provided by Honda Finance Europe Plc, 470 London Road, Slough, Berkshire SL3 8QY. The 5 Year Care Package includes: **Servicing:** All scheduled servicing, as detailed in the vehicles service book, will be covered for 5 years or 62,500 miles, whichever comes first. **Warranty:** In addition to the standard 3 year warranty the customer will receive a complimentary 2 year extended guarantee taking the warranty to 5 years or 90,000 miles, whichever comes first. **Roadside Assist:** In addition to the standard 3 years roadside assistance package the customer will receive complimentary Hondacare Assistance for a further 2 years, taking it to 5 years or 90,000 miles, whichever comes first. **The 5 Year Care Package:** The 5 Year Care Package is optional. It is being offered for £500 including VAT (usual value £1,545 including VAT) and is available to finance or non-finance customers. Please note, should you sell the vehicle during the period of cover, the package remains with the vehicle.



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## Drivetime



## VW pumping up power

**At the 1974 Geneva Motor Show, a sleek new Volkswagen hatchback coupe made its debut.**

Forty years and over a million sales later, the Volkswagen Scirocco is preparing to return to Geneva, with a new range of advanced engines that offer up to 280 PS yet also promise fuel efficiency improvements of up to 19 per cent, without compromising the Scirocco's dynamic performance.

Externally, the Scirocco's stylish shape has been refined and modernised with new headlights and tail lights, as well as revised bumper styling.

The revised front bumper features aerodynamic 'blades' in the outer

section, like those of the latest-generation Golf GTI, with integrated indicator lights, daytime running lights and fog lights.

On models fitted with the optional bi-xenon headlights, the daytime running lights are LEDs within the main headlights. At the rear, all Sciroccos now have LED tail lights, while the bumper has been reshaped to appear lower and more purposeful. As on a Golf, the Volkswagen logo badge now has an additional purpose: functioning as the tailgate release handle.

As before, the range-topping Scirocco R has a distinct look, with bespoke bumpers and alloy wheels. The Scirocco R now comes as standard with 18-inch 'Cadiz' alloy wheels, as on the Golf R. The rest of the range

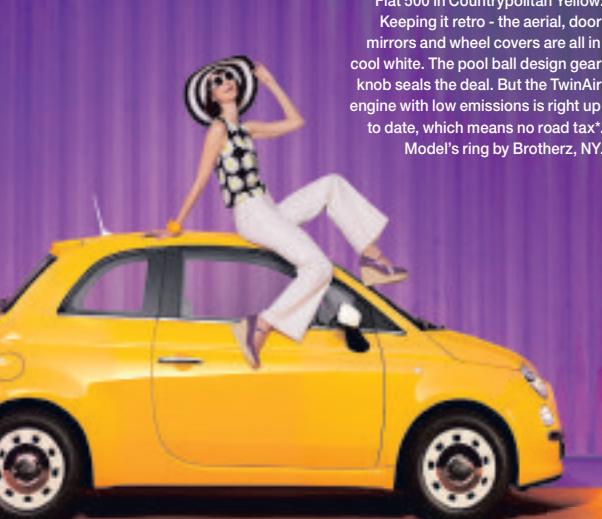
also receives new alloy wheel designs, including the option of the 'Talladega' alloy previously reserved for the 'R'.

Under the bonnet (which as before features the Volkswagen roundel) are six new turbocharged direct-injection petrol and diesel engines, all of which meet EU6 emissions standards and return between 68.9 and 34.9 mpg.

Inside, the dashboard has been updated, with new-look dials and an auxiliary instrument cluster above the centre console, consisting of chronometer, charge pressure and oil temperature gauges – a tribute to the 1974 model.

Orders open in the UK in May, with first deliveries in September. More details available closer to launch.

## LIFE'S TOO SHORT TO WEAR A BORING CAR



Sandra P rocks the retro vibe with a Fiat 500 in Countryopolitan Yellow. Keeping it retro - the aerial, door mirrors and wheel covers are all in cool white. The pool ball design gear knob seals the deal. But the TwinAir engine with low emissions is right up to date, which means no road tax\*. Model's ring by Brotherz, NY.

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Fiat, the car brand with the lowest average CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Europe.<sup>†</sup> Fuel consumption figures for Fiat 500 range in mpg (l/100km): Urban 49.6 (5.7) – 64.2 (4.4); Extra Urban 65.7 (4.3) – 91.1 (3.1); Combined 58.9 (4.8) – 76.3 (3.7). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 113 – 90 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures based on standard EU tests for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Under current DVLA regulations there is no charge for Vehicle Excise Duty in the first year of registration and every subsequent year. Vehicle Excise Duty rates are reviewed annually by the government and are subject to change. \*Source: JATO Dynamics. Based on volume-weighted average CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km) of the best selling brands in Europe, full year 2012.

# Drivetime



## A double win for Jaguar

Jaguar UK received two awards at this year's Chartered Institute of Marketing's Marketing Excellence Awards, in recognition of the 'Your Turn Britain' campaign created for the launch of the new Jaguar F-TYPE.

Your Turn Britain picked up the top spot in both the categories for which it was shortlisted: Best Automotive/Transport Campaign

and Social Media Campaign of the Year.

Both categories were hotly contested, with Jaguar successful versus brands including HSBC, Volkswagen and Haslmann Taylor.

### Attributes

Jaguar UK launched Your Turn Britain in the summer of 2013, working with global social media agency We Are Social and The Brooklyn Brothers. The socially-led campaign celebrated the best of modern Britain, while pro-

moting the product and design attributes of the new Jaguar F-TYPE sports car.

Jaguar UK Marketing Director, Ken Forbes said: "We're delighted with the recognition Your Turn Britain has received. It had social media at its heart – a very modern campaign that positioned and celebrated the F-TYPE as a new modern British icon. By inspiring and engaging with the UK population, we were able to run a campaign that successfully and credibly appealed to a modern British audience."

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Official Government Test Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO<sub>2</sub>. Zafira 1.6i 16v VVT (Manual5), Manual 5-speed: Urban 32.5 (8.7), Extra-urban 51.4 (5.5), Combined 42.2 (6.7). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 157g/km.

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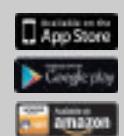
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**Express & Star**

## Hales get runner-up position in round two

WORCESTER Winter League Round 2

On Saturday A & B teams from Halesowen travelled to Redditch and Bromsgrove for the second round of the Worcester Winter League.

The A team had a tough draw but after a strong opening 10 events found themselves leading the gala by six points. However, it was clear by the halfway mark that the contest was going to be close with three teams in contention for the lead. With 10 events to go the team had slipped into second spot but despite a strong final finish Halesowen A were made to settle for the runner-up spot.

The B team were up against other A teams in their gala.

Halesowen swimmers battled hard and finished in a solid third place.

Point scores from Gala 1 (at Redditch): Stourbridge A 191, Halesowen A 189, Redditch A 188, Stourbridge B 116, Oldbury 108

Point scores from Gala 2 (at Bromsgrove): Worcester A 197, Pershore 160, Halesowen B 150, Redditch B 140, Haden Hill 133

## Clarke gets ahead in latest round

STOURBRIDGE racer Steven Clarke showed the rest a clean pair of wheels as he won the latest Arenacross UK round in Newcastle.

The 23-year-old pipped Frenchman Cyrille Coulin in the main event after a frenetic night of racing at the city's Metro Radio Arena last Saturday.

Series leader Fabien Izquierdo came home third, with Clarke rising to fourth in the overall standings thanks to his win, ahead of the next round of the series in Shiffield this weekend.

Victory continued a roller-coaster year for Clarke, who won the first round in Belfast but failed to make the final in the previous round in Liverpool, even though he finished the race off the bike after being forced to jump off right at the finish when his bike dug into the dirt on the final jump.

"That's got to be one of the hardest races of my career," said Clarke. "Not so much for the track layout but the dirt was real soft."

# Old Hales are undone by penalties

BIRMINGHAM Medics 1sts 27

Old Halesians 2nds 19

Once again there was no first team game this week due to a waterlogged pitch. However, the seconds did manage to play.

Old Halesians Seconds took to the field for the first time in several weeks to take on a Medics team who are unbeaten this season.

The home side dominated the early part of the game and they added a penalty and an unconverted try to take an 8-0 lead.

Penalties would eventually prove to be the downfall of a Halesowen team who managed to score more tries than their opponents.

Old Hales got back into the game and on occasions pressurised the Medics defence to keep them on their toes.

However, the home side made regular forays into the Old Hales 22 metre zone and were awarded several kickable penalties that their fullback slotted between the posts.

Three added penalty goals made the half time score 17-0 to the Medics.

Old Hales' half-time team talk seemed to do the trick as they

came out for the second half with all guns blazing.

The Old Hales scrum regularly drove the opposition back and gave a good platform for powerful attacks.

Good interplay from the forwards gave Tom Dempsey the opportunity to crash through the Medics' defence to score close to the posts and his team mate Tom Harris duly added the conversion.

With 10 minutes remaining Old Hales forced a lineout in the Medics 22.

A fine catch and drive by the forwards culminated in hooker, Sam Jones, scoring a try from the back

again and from another driving scrum the ball was quickly moved to the left to allow Andy Tromans to score from the left wing to make the score 17-12.

Unforced errors by Old Hales allowed the Medics more possession and once again they were awarded a penalty close to the posts which they slotted over to add to their tally.

With 10 minutes remaining Old Hales forced a lineout in the Medics 22.

A fine catch and drive by the forwards culminated in hooker, Sam Jones, scoring a try from the back

of the maul for their efforts.

Tom Harris added the extras to make the score 20-19.

The last frantic minutes of the game saw both teams attacking moves ending in errors.

Finally, however, the Medics made the most of some clean ball and managed to score a converted try to make the final score 27-19.

Old Hales can reflect on a game where they outscored the opposition three tries to two but gave away too many penalties and this gave the Medics 15 simple points through penalty kicks that changed the outcome of the game.

## Envile get to ring in a victory over Bel

ENVILLE A (115-5) beat Belbroughton (64 all out) by 51 runs

Envile's openers Matt Branch (35) and Jono Howells (36no) laid a strong foundation for this victory.

On their retirements Envile lost two quick wickets and the run-rate was radically reduced.

Perry for Belbroughton with 2-11 from his three overs was largely responsible for this reverse.

After a short partnership between Tom Bingham and Ben Shorter was dissolved Matt Branch returned but unable to see much of the strike managed to get himself out.

Jono Howells then returned and saw Envile past the 100 mark to set Belbroughton a reasonable target.

They were however, soon in trouble and were reduced to 36-3. The chase became impossible with Envile showing great focus and inspiration.

Oldswinford (109-5) beat Swindon (94-5) by 15 runs

In spite of the early loss of Lee Nightingale, Harry Stanier (27) and Dan Attwood (25) pulled the innings together well until their retirements.

## Spirit from DK is just not enough

Dudley Kingswinford 3  
Macclesfield 26

If spirit was the key ingredient on which a league's success was based, then this DK team would be top of the league.

This was one of their best performances of the season to date, where they held potential promotions candidates Macclesfield to a close 26-3 defeat, restricting high scoring visitors to just four tries.

This, despite playing for almost an hour with 14 men when young flanker Danny Hawkins was red-carded.

A good DK attacking move broke down and the visitors launched a counter attack, and No.8 Ryan Parson scored.

Macclesfield were awarded a penalty try converted by fly half Tom Eaton.

DK's only score was a solitary penalty from fly half Gareth Bow.



Saxons' Pete White feeds the ball to the threequarters during the match against the Leicester Lions

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# SPORT

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Perry is aiming for good season

FANS favourite Tom Perry celebrates his 21st birthday this weekend - and the Cradley man hopes to be celebrating success throughout 2014.

Perry is back with the Heathens, who will again race home meetings at Wolverhampton, after he spent last season on loan to the Isle of Wight.

And he said: "It's great to be back and I can't wait to get started with the Cradley boys."

"It's a milestone birthday for me this week and I hope I can celebrate throughout the season with plenty of success for Cradley."

"The bikes are coming along nicely, it's all part of the preparation for the new season and it's going to be a big season for me both on and off the track."

"I'm looking forward to the challenge because a few things went wrong for me last year and now is my chance to put it right."

Perry says the Heathens management have again got it right with their team selection.

He added: "At Cradley our team is looking pretty strong for the new season."

"There's a good mix of experienced riders who you know will score points, some young riders who could prove really good signings and a few guys on bargain averages. The side looks to have a pretty good balance."

## Watson set to move in

STEVE WATSON is set to become Birmingham's new assistant manager - after the exits of Terry McDermott and Derek Fazackerley.

The duo left at the weekend - although the club are yet to confirm their departure - with Watson primed to step up.

Boss Lee Clark is believed to have initiated the move after Saturday's 2-1 defeat to his former club Huddersfield and the pair went after a meeting during the squad's usual Sunday warm down.

Defeat left Blues 18th in the Championship, who have won just two of their 16 home league outings this season and they are winless in their last 11 matches at St Andrews'.

McDermott and Fazackerley are yet to comment with legal issues and severance pay to be finalised.

## Hales hockey suffer their sixth loss this season

### Stone 6 OHHC 1sts 1

OLD Halesomians Hockey Club lost for the sixth time this season, as they fell to an upcoming and much-improved Stone side, who have lost just once since the Christmas break.

The rain fell heavily prior to pushback, and there was a lot of surface water on the Stone pitch as the game began.

Stone dominated the early exchanges, as their game-plan was heavily effective against the visitors.

Hales struggled to contain the counter-attack of Stone, who were much stronger in all areas of the pitch.

### Hockey

Stone opened the scoring, and they soon doubled their lead following a mistake from returning goalkeeper Steven Charlton.

Hales were dejected, but fought back to create a few chances of their own. They were unable to convert these chances into goals, and Stone soon hit with a counter attack which tore the Hales defence in two.

Stone hit again before the break, and Hales faced a massive challenge in the second half as they found themselves 4-0 down.

Hales were much improved in the second

half, but were far from their best. Hales had a few penalty corners which they were either blocked by the Stone defence who were solid all afternoon, or dashed wide of the goal.

Stone grabbed a 5th goal and put the game beyond the reach of the travelling and wet Hales players.

Stone continued to hit Hales hard, and scored once again to make it six, before Hales grabbed a consolation when Ben Hughes found space on the right, where his ball across the D was helped on by Paul Woodall, to Graham Knight at the back post who could not miss from close range.

Old Hales will look upon this week as a 'bad day at the office', and they must improve significantly to ensure they finish as high as possible in the league.

Despite the loss, Hales were able to hold onto their fourth placed spot, and they host South Nottingham, who are fighting for survival, next week, 1.30pm start at Ormiston Forge Academy.

Other Results:

Stourport 2 OHHC Ladies 1sts 1  
OHHC 2nds 2 Old Silihams 1  
Stourport 5 OHHC 3rds 0  
OHHC 4ths 3 Olton & West Warwick 2

## Yeltz in goalless contest

### Goole 0 Halesowen 0

BOTH teams deserved a point after producing an entertaining game in difficult, windy weather.

There were chances, and Halesowen showed first when Elliot Turner found himself clear on 19 minutes but shot wide. Goole forced a series of free-kicks in the first half but both defences were on top in the wind.

Four minutes after half-time the visitor's top scorer, Ben Hasleby, got clear but shot wide under pressure.

Turner brought out an excellent save from Goole goalkeeper Liam Flynn on 52 minutes as the home team's main threats again came from corners and free-kicks. A minute from time Halesowen thought they had won it when Asa Charlton sent in a free-kick and Flynn and Joe Hull jumped for it, the ball ending up in the net. But the referee ruled there had been a foul on the goalkeeper.

In injury time Goole could have nicked all three points but Halesowen goalkeeper Matt Sergeant turned a 30-yard shot from Matt Husbands wide.

Halesowen are now second in Evo-Stik Division One South.

## Woffy wins the man of the year

WOLVERHAMPTON speedway ace Tai Woffinden left a host of motorcycling icons trailing as he blitzed to the Motorcycle News Man of the Year Award for 2013.

The 23-year-old was up against a galaxy of two-wheeled stars from the road racing world, but bagged twice the number of votes notched by any of the other 13 shortlisted riders.

**The Chronicle**, a Midland News Association Ltd publication, printed by the company at Ketley, Telford. Thursday February 20

# BIG BEN BANGS IN A HAT-TRICK

Arlesey Town 1 Stourbridge 5

**BEN BILLINGHAM** fired a first-half hat-trick as Stourbridge made full use of the conditions and took advantage of a jittery display from keeper Yannick Makiese on his home debut.

The Glassboys came out convincing winners despite being a man short for the last 25 minutes following the sending-off of Louis Harris.

With 16 minutes gone the visitors grabbed the lead after a poor goal-kick off the floor by Makiese allowed Billingham to capitalise and having collected the ball, he ran forwards before flogging the ball away low past the French keeper.

### Slipped

Four minutes later Gary Hackett's men doubled their advantage after Billingham slipped a pass to Drew Canavan on the right and he drove towards the by-line before pulling the ball back towards Billingham who was upended by a mistimed tackle from Andre Maltay to win a penalty, which Sean Geddes duly converted for his 23rd goal of the season.

Arlesey responded and the Bedfordshire hosts pulled a goal back in the 24th minute.

A low right-wing centre by Jonny McNamara was cut out by Will Richards, however he dwelled too long on the ball and was tackled by Juan Mouko Nsue who having won possession was then able to beat Dean Cole.

With the skies had brightened and the wind had eased a little by the time the second-half got underway.

On 58 minutes Stourbridge threatened again and a left-wing flag-kick from Geddes fell to the feet of Leon Broadhurst, however his shot on target was well blocked.

### Football

In deteriorating conditions, their joy proved short-lived as a mistake by Makiese gifted the Glassboys a goal a minute later. Geddes drifted in a free-kick that should have provided the keeper with a comfortable low gather, however he fumbled the ball to the feet of Richards and he turned the ball goalwards with Kayelden Brown applying the final touch.

Just after the half hour Billingham struck again, beating Makiese with a sweetly-struck angled 20-yard free-kick into the far bottom corner of the net and then on 35 minutes he completed his hat-trick when he whipped in an inswinging free-kick on the wind from close to the touchline on the right and he managed to catch out Makiese with the ball dropping underneath the crossbar and into the far top corner of the goal.

The skies had brightened and the wind had eased a little by the time the second-half got underway.

On 58 minutes Stourbridge threatened again and a left-wing flag-kick from Geddes fell to the feet of Leon Broadhurst, however his shot on target was well blocked.

## Saxons tame the Lions to sit on top of league



Stourbridge Saxons moved to the top of the National League 2 thanks to games lost to the weather at the weekend and their 38-0 win over Leicester Lions. They now have a break ahead - Full report inside

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